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CHRISTIAN UNION,

AND

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN ITS RELATIONS

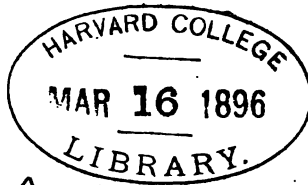
TO CHURCH UNITY.

Prepared
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*J. H. Gardiner,
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PREFACE.

This little work may be regarded as something in the nature of an apology, not in the common, but in the ancient acceptation of the term. It is designed as a book which a Churchman may put into the hands of those who are ignorant of, or prejudiced against his faith, or which he may give to any of that large and increasing class who are thoughtfully inquiring respecting his Church. In this light the Author trusts, though there may be a few things in these pages which may be regarded as mere private opinions, yet that his brethren generally will find nothing that they will be unwilling, and much that they will be glad to circulate. Whether the work will help the cause of Christian Union, may by some be questioned. But if that end is to be furthered by a frank declaration of one's own position, put forth in terms of kindness and Christian charity, it is hoped that the question will be answered affirmatively. Recently, in Boston, ministers of different religious bodies successively, in the same pulpit, advocated the claims each of his own Church, in itself considered, and in its relation to others. The effort was well received. The present publication is an attempt to do in a form adapted for general circulation what was so ably done in the pulpit, on that occasion, by the pleader for The Protestant Episcopal Church, and as the same mode of urging respective and comparative claims is open to all, and indeed used by all, no objection can rest against the plan of this book, as it is trusted, also, that none can be brought against its spirit and execution. It is commended to every reader with the prayer, "God speed the right and the truth!"

O ALMIGHTY GOD, who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone ; grant that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, all Christians may be so joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, that they may be an Holy Temple, acceptable unto Thee. Give them the abundance of thy grace, that with one heart, they may desire the prosperity of Thy Holy Apostolic Church, and with one mouth, may profess the faith once delivered to the Saints. Defend them from the sins of heresy and schism. Let not the foot of pride come nigh to hurt them, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast them down. And grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness, that so they may walk in the ways of truth and peace, and at last be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting, through Thy merits, O blessed Jesus, Thou gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, who art with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

CHRISTIAN UNION. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

"Blessed are the Peace-makers."—*St. Matt.*, v. 9.

AT the last General Convention of The Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, the following resolutions were adopted by the House of Bishops :—

Resolved, As the opinion of the House of Bishops, That in view of the desirableness of union among Christians, and as a pledge of willingness to communicate or receive information tending to that end ; and, in order to conference, if occasion or opportunity should occur, this House will appoint, by ballot, a committee of five Bishops, as an organ of communication or conference with such Christian bodies, or individuals, as may desire it ; to be entitled "The Commission on Church Unity."

That, in making the above appointment, it is distinctly understood that the Commission is clothed with no authority to mature plans of unity with other Christian bodies, or to propound expositions of doctrine or discipline.

The Rt. Rev. T. C. Brownell, presiding Bishop, with Bishops McIlvaine, A. Potter, Elliott, and Burgess, were the Committee appointed under these resolutions.

Although that Convention was every way pleasant and greatly for the furtherance of Christ's cause, the above resolutions will be regarded by many of the good, and, we trust, by our divine Lord, as its most important act and crowning glory.

Few of us who owe allegiance to that body are so sanguine as to look for any immediate results from such action, and none of us can see any way by which its proposed final objects can be attained; yet we rejoice in it, because a move in a right direction often opens the way when there seems to be none, because it is high time that something should be done towards healing the dissensions of the Church of God, and because we believe that the very inception of such a movement will draw a blessing from the great Head of the Church, and may lead him to put us in the pathway to unity and peace. Some of our brethren of other names may regard this action of our Bishops as an arrogant assumption, founded on claims that can never be recognized; and some may expound it as a confession of weakness, but multitudes more who sigh for peace, and whose daily prayer is like our own—that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life, will rejoice with us in our present position. When war rages among nations, it is a hopeful sign if mediation be talked of, or ambassadors of peace be appointed, though the conflict still goes on, for it shows a weariness of strife that must soon bring it to a close. We are glad that in our own body there is now a hand no longer cloaked and muffled, though still hanging down inactive, for a Christian brother to grasp—if he will; and we trust

that it will yet lock us in true fellowship with all "who love our Lord—both theirs and ours."

The author of the present work proposes, first, to offer some thoughts on Christian union; and then, in a second part, to urge the claims which the Protestant Episcopal Church has for taking the initiative, and for being the rallying point, in the restoration of unity to the Church of Christ.

On the second branch of the subject, the writer will give his own views as an Episcopalian, and of course cannot expect a full concurrence from those of other names, though, he trusts, much that is said will commend itself to their approval. On the first point he has already published in *The New York Observer*, some of the thoughts that will appear here, and the interest awakened by those communications—their wide circulation through other religious papers, and the kindly responses drawn forth, are among the chief inducements to this further effort, for they show that there is deep feeling on the subject in the heart of the Church, and that the time for some action cannot be far distant.

We want discussion on these great points, that we may see how nearly we can agree, how much of union there is already among us, how much can be yielded for the sake of peace without any sacrifice of conscience, and that we may know the many and powerful reasons which should draw us together as the heart of one man. If there were as much effort to unite as there is to magnify points of difference, we should soon be united. Were a convention of the wisest and holiest of each denomination to assemble—excluding controversialists, usually not the wisest and holiest—no doubt they could soon find some common platform on which to stand.

We must, as much as possible, turn away from the past, except as we mourn over it. Quarrels in families never end so long as one criminating reference to old offences is indulged, and wars among nations are usually settled with little allusion to the disputes which caused them. Let by-gones be by-gones. We have all sinned against each other. Which has offended most deeply let God judge. We must look candidly at each other's position, make all due allowance for conscientious difficulties in the way of union, admit the features of special excellence in each other's system—for each has some, and no one has all excellencies—and be ready to sacrifice for peace sake, much that we love and deem truly desirable, if it can be done with a good conscience.

The author claims no right to speak for his own church, save such a right as every man has to cast water on a conflagration which is destroying life and property. A weak hand may bear a flag of truce, when a strong hand is wanted for the standard of war. A dove's feeble wing may carry the olive branch into the ark, when the raven's is needed to skim over the angry waves of strife. There are points in the subject of Christian union that will require the wisdom of our wisest men to handle, but the greater part of the field lies open to those of ordinary attainment and experience in the Christian life. And while so many thousands rush into the arena of controversy, and every stripling draws his weapon there unabashed and unrebuked, it surely may be permitted to one who has long sighed for peace, to speak a word for peace. May the God who maketh men to be of one mind in a house, grant that it be not spoken in vain.

CHAPTER II.

SCRIPTURAL PATTERN OF CHURCH UNITY.

"And there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."—*St. John*, i. 16.

WE have become so familiar with our divisions that, like the wretched victims of the goitre, we regard that as a beauty which is indeed a sad blemish and a dangerous excrescence. We hear more of the advantage of a multiplicity of sects than of lament for it. Nay, we even go so far as to think it according to the mind and will of God, that there should be a variety of denominations, and that this is a part of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Until we divest ourselves of all such impressions, no plea for Christian union will have much weight. Let us turn to the word of God, to learn his mind and will.

We take the position, then, that God designed his people to be joined together in visible, as well as spiritual communion and fellowship, and to be one in doctrine, ministry, and worship; and that the present divided state of the Church must therefore be loathsome and deeply abhorrent in his sight.

We might infer as much as this from the character of God as a God of truth, which is one and indivisible, and as a God of peace;—but we have his will more explicitly revealed.

Under the old dispensation, the Church was one in visible form as well as in spiritual union, and that was a church modelled by God's own hand. In all that was

not of its very nature local and temporary, in all that was essential and could remain, it was a shadow and type of the Christian Church. Surely we cannot assert that its visible unity was a feature which was to vanish away. It was one which was to remain in Christ's Church militant. It will distinguish the Church triumphant.

Every attempt to form a separate worship under that dispensation was condemned. When the tribes beyond Jordan with pious intent set up their memorial altar, they were fiercely charged with purposes of schism, but most earnestly deprecated the suspicion. Jeroboam has his name ever coupled with an epithet of infamy for the matter of the worship at Bethel and Dan, and the sin into which he led his people was the cause of the early and long-continued judgment on the ten tribes. When in Babylon, with their Temple in utter ruin, and a total suspension of that sacrificial system so essential to their worship, there was no attempt on the part of the Jews to set up an altar, but all prayed toward Jerusalem. And the Samaritan Temple was pronounced by our Lord, schismatical.

And yet there was as much then to justify separation as there ever has been since. When such as Caiaphas and the sons of Eli ministered, when idols were set up in the chambers of the Temple, and when for seventy years the temple itself lay in ruins, there was surely, if ever, good reason for establishing new altars. But no; they were not permitted. Our Lord upheld the authority, and attended the ministrations of his own murderers. The Temple was the one home of God's people. The Synagogue was everywhere open to the Jew, and often to the Christian Jew. And when the

kingdom of God was taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles, it was only after the most explicit revelations from God, and long resistance to them on the part of the apostles, that the separation was made, and the new worship of the Christian Church arose.

In the New Testament we have the clearest evidence that the unity of the Church of the old dispensation was to have continuance. Our Lord speaks of the whole body of his people as sheep of one fold under one shepherd. In that solemn prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of St. John, our divine Master repeats again and again the petition that his people might all be one, as if his soul was burdened with the foresight of the evils of our divisions. The figures under which his Church is set forth are all expressive of unity, as, for instance, a city compact together, a kingdom, a body with many members, a feast with many guests, a tree with many branches, and a temple on one and the same foundation. St. Paul exhorts Christians to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and says: There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. To the Corinthians he says: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To those who named themselves as his own followers, he says indignantly: Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? If he was so moved by little party preferences, which did not amount to

such a separation as to divide the Church at Corinth into sects that would not commune together, and among which Paul, Cephas, and Apollos could not freely minister, how would he be affected by our unchristian divisions? And elsewhere he says: I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned; and avoid them.

Nor do we find any instance, so long as the inspired preachers of the gospel remained on earth, in which there was such a separation among Christ's true disciples that there was no free fellowship in the ministry, and Sacraments, and in worship. There were strifes and divisions, but they amounted not to an alienation such as we now witness. There were gross heresies also, but these were without. So long as the first founders of the Church lived, it was visibly and truly one. Nor did those inspired men make any provision for after separations. No doubt there may be extreme cases where it is right to withdraw from others, as in the Reformation of the Church of England, which was rather, however, the throwing off of an usurper's yoke by a whole body of people, than a division, or where doctrines grossly unscriptural are imposed, when the sin of schism rests on those who impose them, not on those who withdraw; but the gospel makes no provision for such cases. It declares God's will that the Church should be one, just as it declares the duty of submission to rulers and to parents, with no reserve or limit, and men must take the responsibility of saying whether and when a case may arise where rulers and parents may be resisted, or Christians separate—a responsibility not to be assumed but in extreme necessity.

There is no ideal of such a Church as we now have, in the Old Testament Scriptures, or the New.

Were our Lord again to come among us, as in the days of his flesh, who can doubt but that he would manifest the sternest displeasure at the divided state of his Church, and that this evil would more attract his attention than the condition of the heathen, or the slow progress of his gospel. Where would he go? Among which of the many bodies of Christians would he find his home? Would he pitch his tent away from all of them, and call unto himself the faithful from among all, and so build again the tabernacle which had fallen down? A kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation, was his own inspired saying, and a city or house divided against itself cannot stand. Even Satan's empire could not stand against divided counsels; how much less the Church, whose first law is love and peace, and unity! No one can doubt that if the mind and will of Christ could now be expressed, he would direct us, as we loved his name, to find at once some means of restoring the visible union of the Church.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVILS OF DISUNION.

"For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart."—*Judges*, v. 16.

THE pernicious influence of our divisions upon the interests of Christ's kingdom, presents itself in so many and strong lights, and is so obvious, that it would

be hardly needful to dwell upon the subject, were it not for the strange notion already referred to, as held by some, that our schisms strengthen the cause of Christ, and tend to the purity and preservation of his holy religion.

If God intended his Church to be one, it is certain that his design, if carried out, must be more conducive to strength, purity, and prosperity, than any such fancied improvement on his pattern, as is to be found in division. God knew what was in man, and constituted his Church for man, and had it been necessary to have one sect of Christians as a watch against another, lest the truth of the Gospel should be corrupted, or one form of subsistence for men of a certain cast of mind, and another for those of different tastes and temperaments, we should undoubtedly have had two Baptisms instead of one, and hints or rules for separate denominations for their own government and in their intercourse with each other. Could its divinely constituted unity be restored, no doubt the Church would be every way the gainer in purity, strength, and prosperity. Should it be objected, that if God had cared greatly for unity in doctrine, worship, and visible fellowship, he would have furnished us with the working model, or pattern of such a Church, as he did of the Tabernacle to Moses; we reply: He has probably done so, and if we would be willing to look for it, where by common consent we look for law and example in many other matters, to the times immediately succeeding the apostles, we might find that our Lord did not remain on earth for forty days after his resurrection instructing his disciples in the things pertaining to his kingdom, without leaving them forms as well as counsels of unity.

But the evident evils of divisions show clearly that they are not of God. Look at their influence on missions. To appreciate it in reference to the foreign field, we ought to stand on Heathen soil, in the midst of, and confronting some millions of idolaters. Slight differences between Christian brethren there dwindle away. The contrast between the worst form of Christianity and the best of heathenism is so great, and the contest with the latter so fearful, that the aid of any Christian brother is welcomed, and, practically, there is more of fraternal feeling and co-operation among missionaries abroad, than among those who send them. Dr. Livingston says that all classes of Christians find that sectarian rancor soon dies out, when they are working together among and for the real Heathen. The heralds of the Cross amid pagans would be foremost in entreating us to be reconciled to each other. We may yet feel a like pressure. God may force us to unite by letting forth such a flood of infidelity and indifferentism as will compel us to come together, just as upon some island in time of inundation animals wild and tame cluster together with men, unharmed and unharmed, or, as those of every persuasion draw near each other when their ship is about to be engulfed in the stormy ocean. A furious persecution may be the medicine for our divisions, unless prophylactic means avert the prescription. At present we have not enough of opposition to lead us to seek the strength that is gained in union; and perhaps the enemy is wiser to let us straggle in bands, and in security and ease, than to force us to unite; but found of him divided as we now are, when the onslaught comes, the odds will be fearfully against us.

In Shanghai, no less than ten distinct Missionary organizations—not all, however, but for the most part of different denominations, are carrying on their work. This is given as a single illustration of our mode of operations. What could we expect but that the Heathen would say, “Agree among yourselves what the Gospel is ere you preach it to us. You call yours a religion of love. You boast that all are one in Christ; and yet you cannot meet together at the table of your common Lord, nor own each other as ministers of Jesus.” Surely the Heathen must be perplexed, and the hands of Missionaries weakened, by our divisions. Rome has the advantage of us here in missions among the pagans.

Home missions suffer, though perhaps in a less degree. In the rising villages of the west we find all the denominations of the east, with churches half-filled, half-supported, jealous of each other, dragging upon Missionary Societies, and often basing their appeals for aid on motives of rivalry. If all were one in Christ, a single church might accommodate all, leaving men and means for perishing souls elsewhere. A vast amount of money now expended on the machinery of rival societies for papers and agencies, might be saved by union; and the larger expenditure at present required, may be set down as so much waste or misuse of our Lord’s money; and of money, too, hardly gathered, and needed a thousand fold for a multitude of objects.

But all this is nothing compared with the fact, that, by our want of unity we are losing the divine blessing in labors for evangelizing the world. We are like rival clans—united indeed against a common foe—but carrying on our warfare each in his own way, with no concert

with each other, and improving every interval for a private skirmish with one another. Suppose that a great Captain, like Washington, had been invited in our war for liberty to put himself at the head of our troops, while every State was acting independently; would he not have wisely and prudently declined the doubtful honor, until a Congress had brought all under one flag, and into united effort? It is common to represent the various bodies of Christians as only so many regiments of the same army; but if there was no more unity among the regiments of a brigade than there is among sects of Christians, a general at their head would find himself in a strange position. If Christ is to conduct the armies of the Cross to the conquest of the world, we may be sure that it will not be while they are in their present position; for such a straggling, disconnected army, might well shame and discourage any leader.

Why is it that modern missions are so unsuccessful, compared with those of the first preachers of the Gospel? We have the same word of God, the same Holy Spirit—men of piety equal to that of many, if not of any, in the apostolic age, preachers ready to suffer martyrdom for Christ, more money for missions, greater facilities of travel, the aid of the press, less violence on the part of the Heathen, and often protection from it by the power of Christian sway, while superstitions, then vigorous, are now tottering to decay; and Christianity the assailant—then in its infancy—has now the matured strength of manhood, and the experience of a thousand contests. Every way the advantage seems to be with us, but not the success. Why is this? The early church was not a divided church. Every time the Holy Ghost was poured out in those large effusions by

which thousands were converted in a day, we are told in reiterated and strong language that believers "were all with one accord in one place," that "they lifted up their voice to God with one accord," and that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." There were divisions in those days, but only such as may spring up now in any congregation, that still holds together; or, like family jars, ending not in alienation and estrangement. Apollos was not silenced nor shunned, though he knew and preached only the baptism of John, and was ignorant of the great atonement, and of the gift of the Spirit; nor were Jews separated from Gentiles, though the former still circumcised their children and clung to their ritual, while the latter came not under the yoke of ordinances. They had not learned in that day to set up a new Church upon every little variance. The Holy Dove was not frightened away by contentions; and we must return to that primitive unity ere we can hope for their success. They, united, preached the Gospel to the whole world, ere the last apostle died. We, divided, during centuries, have left millions to die without ever having heard of the name of Jesus. We weep and lament over the slow progress of the Gospel. We redouble our prayers and our fasts; but God might say to us as to Joshua, "Get thee up! wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies." We must put away the accursed thing, and return to apostolic unity, ere we can hope that God will go before us to victory, or pour out that residue of the Spirit, foretold in His word, for the conversion of the nations, of which outpouring the Pentecostal gift was a pledge and a type, both in the results and the

means by which they were sought and gained. The temple of Janus must be again shut, ere the Prince of Peace will make his second advent to reign over all the earth.

In the present aspect of affairs there seems to be evidently something lacking to any great successes of the Gospel. It has been preached to all nations for a witness unto them. Popery and Islamism, twins in birth, though strong in numbers, bear marks of dissolution, and seem about ready to expire together. It is not covetousness that withholds the blessing, for never was so much given for the cause of Christ. Large societies are sending forth their Bibles and tracts by millions. And yet we meet not with corresponding success. Progress commensurate with our means is not made in missions. In this country not enough candidates for the ministry offer themselves to supply the vacancies by deaths. Revivals have in a great measure died out, questionable indeed at the best, yet once greatly relied upon by some as a mode of increase. Accessions to the communion do hardly equal losses; old instrumentalities are receiving a divided support. Denominations are dividing more and more. Infidelity and insubordination to civil rule are frightfully on the increase. The masses of society are festering in corruption unreached, and unhealed. India, Africa, the Turkish Empire, Japan and China, with more than half of earth's population in their territories, have been successively laid open for the introduction of Christianity, but the Christian hosts are not ready to occupy the fields Providence has made free to them. Something seems to be wanting to our success. God has some controversy with us. There is an Achan in the camp. What do we need? What

must be done, ere our Joshua—Jesus—will lead us on to the conquest of the world? We need “all to be one that the world may believe.”

Some have thought that the union of Christians in the great societies for Bible and tract distribution was to be the union, and all the union, for the world’s conversion; but these themselves have hardly escaped from being rent asunder, and schisms among Christians have multiplied during the day of such societies. This is not the oneness which is to be followed by the world’s belief in Jesus. Could all who love the Lord be brought together in visible union and fellowship, we might hope that the glad cry would soon arise, “Hallelujah! for the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever.” God must convert us to each other before the world can be converted. “Bless us, that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.”

Prophecy connects the millennial glory with the perfect unity of the Church, so that it is vain to look for the one without the other. “The watchmen shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion.” “Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.” “I will give unto them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever.” “For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” The dew of Hermon, emblem of the Spirit’s grace, descends on a city at unity with itself. It may be said that the millennium is to heal our dissensions, and to precede their healing. Nay, certainly at the farthest, the latter-day glory and the heal-

ing of strife are to be coetaneous ; but the better view is that the latter will immediately precede the former. If the world's conversion were to be altogether by a divine interposition, we might conclude that the healing of dissension would be put off, and included in that great work ; but if the Church is to be prepared and used for that conquest, if Christians are not only "to look for, but hasten the coming (the true reading of 2 St. Peter iii. 12) of the day of God," then our unhappy divisions must first be healed, ere Christ can reign upon earth. Solomon's prosperous kingdom, extending to the utmost bounds of the promised inheritance, was a type of the universal sovereignty of Christ, and David, the man of war, must die ere Solomon could reign, or that temple, which went up without sound of axe or hammer, could be erected.

And our position with regard to each other is inconsistent, and humiliating. It is sad enough in respect to the worldly, and we can hardly resent such a taunting reply as the elder Adams gave, who, when asked to contribute to foreign missions, said, "Here are four or five churches in our little village, whose ministers and members cannot commune or worship together, nor scarcely speak to each other ; go, and convert them to Christ, and then send the Gospel abroad." We know that our divisions are lowering us in the eyes of worldlings, and that reason shows them that they are utterly inconsistent with the religion we profess. And we ourselves feel the evil, apologize for it as we may. There is not a Christian of any of the names usually called evangelical, but that assents to every article of the Apostles' and Nicene Creed, and can unite in every petition of the Litany of the Episcopal service,

chant the *Te Deum*, sing Toplady's "Rock of Ages," and Heber's missionary hymn, and utter the Lord's Prayer, and yet, united on all these points, united in regard to the helplessness of fallen man, the need of an atonement, the supreme deity of the Eternal Son, the Trinity, the Spirit's new-creating and sanctifying work, the Resurrection, the Judgment, we separate on some one point, and can hold no fellowship with one another. Few are so exclusive in their faith that they will not freely acknowledge the true and deep piety of many in every other pale, and admire their zeal in good works, nor do they doubt that God will open to them the gates of Heaven;—but the doors of the Church on earth must not be opened to them. God owns them as his children, but we must not own them as brethren, at least not as brethren fully recognized. We make our Creed far more exclusive than we believe God will make his own holy abode. We cannot at present have it otherwise, but these are strange inconsistencies. The Church ought to include "all who hold the Head," all who are washed in the blood of Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, all who will, as we may reasonably hope, inherit eternal life; but we reduce it within narrower bounds, so far at least as our action can go. It is vain to say that we are all one in spirit, though not in outward form; for if one in spirit, we should be one in church fellowship, nor can we ever be truly one in spirit, until in outward relationship we are one. It is vain to say that we love each other when we commune not together, nor worship together, nor acknowledge each other's ministry. We feel the evil. We make awkward excuses for it. We are embarrassed by it in our intercourse with each other. And there are but few true

Christians who would not be glad to be relieved from it, and to find some mode by which this left-handed brotherhood might be exchanged for the full and free fellowship of the Gospel.

Looking at our subject in the light of God's word and of the teachings of experience and reason, it is not too much to say, that if all true Christians could now unite in one visible and holy fellowship, the last great hinderance to the world's conversion would be taken away, Satan would leap affrighted from his throne, Jesus would put himself at the head of our hosts for final victory, and the smile of a reconciled God would soon rest upon every part of our sin-accursed earth. Who can doubt that such a movement towards each other would be almost immediately followed by the conquest of the world for Christ? Think of it, ye Christian men. Pray over it. And if the assertion seem well-founded, then certainly ye will not rest till some way shall be discovered of restoring unity to the Church, and victory to her banners. The breaking down of party lines everywhere, and the rending asunder of religious bodies, seem to indicate that God has the purpose in view of building up some new form of ecclesiastical subsistence, comprehending perhaps within its fold all who love the Lord Jesus, and mark the present time as favorable for discussion; while our own country, untrammelled by any union of Church and State, is a hopeful field for negotiating terms of peace.

CHAPTER IV.

OBSTACLES TO CHRISTIAN UNION.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions—and avoid them."—*Rom. xvi. 15.*

SOME of the obstacles to Christian union will next be noticed.

A hinderance of greater weight than worth is to be found in the characteristic peculiarities, not of doctrine, but of manner, habits, taste, modes of thought and expression—a certain *ethos*—belonging to each denomination, that, like the garb and customs of nations, separates more than any substantial and real differences. It is true there are such ecclesiastical characteristics, and that they are so marked that an observing eye may often discover at a glance to what persuasion a stranger cleric belongs, or even in what seminary of his own Church he was educated. And this feeling of strangeness, as we go among brethren, is so repulsive, as to make us doubt whether the substance of true religion is to be found where its outward forms are so unlike our own, and may operate strongly against the idea of union. But all this would soon wear off by contact. Like the various races of our land, among whom a wise policy forbids all old national badges and organizations, and which, in pursuing it, become thoroughly American in a few generations, Christians of every name, if separating walls were broken down, would soon, by attrition, lose, as pebbles do on the sea-shore, angular and

repulsive roughness, and Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites meet with one accord in the same temple, declaring the wonderful works of God.

Some supposed advantages of disunion have already been referred to as making many contented with it, such as the watch which Christians of various sects keep upon the Bible, preserving it from corruption, and the light which is thrown upon truth by their controversies. In further reply to such arguments, we ask, Is it necessary then for our great King to adopt the policy of earthly monarchs who play off one great vassal against another, and so preserve their own throne and rule by balancing such rivalries? Do we find any indication of such a policy in God's word? Was Israel more pure when the tribes separated, or is the Church sounder in doctrine now than in her days of pristine unity? Our jealous contests are a poor substitute for holy love to God and to each other. Shame on the Christian who shall even mention as an advantage that which ought to humble us in the dust. Men might as well congratulate themselves over the value of the charred sticks of some pleasant dwelling once their common abode, but which their own hands have fired.

Connected with this, we may refer to the avowal that our separate organizations promote peace and are necessary to it. We are told that we never shall have peace, until all are allowed to serve God in their own way, and we can agree to differ. The anecdote given by Dr. Hewitt, in a Methodist Conference, of a good deacon who thought the best security against contentions among Christians of different names, was in a fence ten rails high, is repeated with much approbation. And, indeed, so long as there is a real separation, such

a preservative of peace would be a wise one, for a sure way of creating quarrels among neighbors, is to cut a door of free access to each other's houses and yards. All forced intercourse, all hollow truces, and patched-up treaties, and, perhaps we may add, all Christian alliances, and all exchanges of pulpits, where no visible and substantial agreement exists, though well meant, do amount to but very little, and often increase the evil of discord instead of ending it. But, if all could really become one family, then the door could safely be cut, and the fences taken down. And this is the Gospel remedy. It does not put this brother in one enclosure, and that in another, like vicious animals that may gore each other unless kept apart, but regards all Christ's people as sheep, which may be kept by thousands in one fold and under one shepherd. We must contrive to find a fold that will hold us all, and then to have enough of the lamb-like spirit to enable us to occupy it together. We must discover some ground of union that we can all stand upon, so that we can call ourselves one Church—one in outward and visible form, in doctrine, in spirit, and have but one pasture, though there be large liberty in feeding in it, or else our contentions will never cease. To separate on every difference of doctrine, and to set up a new Church on account thereof, and then to ask to be let alone in it, never has tended to peace, never will.

Denominational self-complacency and boasting are obstacles to union. Our bishops, in connection with their recent movement, caution us against laudation of self and disparagement of others. We need this counsel from our fathers. Our brethren of other names, probably need it. The evil is as old as the apostles'

days, when one said, I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos, only that it is now more aggravated, when they of Paul and Apollos have parted entirely asunder. None of us have a perfect system, whatever its excellencies, and when God shall build up again his one true Catholic Church, it will probably be with materials gathered from all existing Churches.

Judging each other by our worst features and men, is an obstacle to Christian union. The most unfaithful specimens of a Church—its ultraists, its eccentric, comet-like characters—are usually best known without, and attract most attention and comment. If there be an extremist in doctrinal matters, he is regarded as a sample of the whole; if an ungodly professor, he is selected as the fruit of the system in point of piety; if some disgraceful procedure, which causes the good to hang their heads in sorrow and shame, that is visited upon all, as if a natural growth instead of an excrescence. If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed of one another. We touch the shore of our neighbor's possession, and finding there sand, rock, and foaming breakers, conclude that it is all naught and barren, while inland there may be a region of beauty and verdure where we ourselves might find an abode of pleasantness, in which is much to love and to desire, if but in unity and union with our own.

Over-refining upon Creeds, Platforms, Articles, and Confessions of Faith, is an obstacle to Christian union. These are designed as securities against error, and as bonds of unity; but when extended too far, they have rather embalmed and perpetuated error and stereotyped divisions. They are the mountains interposed in God's heritage, that make enemies of those who else, like kin-

dred drops, had melted into one. They should set forth only the simple and fundamental truths of our religion as in the ancient Creeds, and perhaps the XXXIX Articles. When doctrine true and false is once embodied in labored and multitudinous Articles of Faith, it becomes a fortress which must be defended, and when such fortresses are multiplied, they become, like those of petty clustering principalities, hinderances to the traveller on the king's highway, and obstacles to growth, consolidation, and prosperity. We want, as in a team, just the simplest and lightest of this gearing possible, only enough to hold us together and to enable us to draw well; more would be cumbrous and a clog.

There are often great hinderances to Christian union among the clergy. Polemic divines dwell upon points of controversy until they are unduly magnified; their skill is shown in demolishing a rival or the man of straw set up in his place; their self-importance is more magnified in being the Paul or Apollos of a party than the ministers of Christ; and, as self-seeking has had much to do with originating the new names which have superseded that honored name of Christian, which alone should be borne by Christ's followers, so in the same source do we find that which in part gives continuance to our denominational appellations. We should soon come together, said a prominent layman of the Presbyterian Church, were it not for the clergy; and though the charge may not be true of them as a body, no doubt there are many among them who are great obstacles to union.

The seeming hopelessness of union, is another hinderance in our way. Scarcely a Christian can be found

but that will say that we ought to unite, and that it would be a blessed thing if we could; but then it will be added—it is hopeless to think of it. We have no right to speak thus. Is union desirable? Will God bless the effort to bring it about? Is it that which we may pray for in faith as in accordance with his mind and will? Are our schisms sinful? Would Jesus, if among us, command us all to be one? Would Paul repeat his earnest warnings against divisions? What is right? What is the will of God? These are the questions we are to ask, and if it be clear that God wills that we should be one, though a great sea separate as we go forward it will open—though a mountain were in our way faith would remove it or make it a plain. Better to break the broken limbs again and set them right—especially when we have such a great physician to bless the operation with his oversight and skill, than to hobble on in this crippled way forever. The attempt has never yet been fairly and fully made. Centuries of war in the Church have passed away without a congress for peace. Partial efforts have indeed been put forth, but the end aimed at has not been visible and substantial union, but only combination against some common foe, or for some special purpose, with no idea of compromise or sacrifice for vital and real unity, and for only such low aims, God's blessing could hardly be expected, or at least no more would be given than was sought. Never did Protestant Christians even meet to seek some plan of mutual agreement. Is not this true? Shall the sword devour forever? Thirty years of war will bring nations to their senses, but we Christians for centuries fight on, with no cry for peace. We want a deeper conviction of the evil of our dissensions. They are of

the devil. God abhors them. Read his mind as everywhere expressed, and it is that we should all be one, in Christ ; nor is it hopeless to expect that we shall be. It is fixed in God's word and purpose that we shall. We must come together, and the only question is, when, and how ? questions to be easily solved when the will and the heart for the work are not wanting.

The want of prayer for Christian unity is another obstacle to its attainment. Of course if we look upon the thing as hopeless, we shall not pray for it, unless, indeed, we happen to have a liturgy handed down from days when oneness in Christ did not seem a dream of fancy ; and so are compelled to pray in every assemblage for worship, "that all who profess and call themselves Christians may hold the faith in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." We have days of fasting and prayer for the conversion of the world ; we need them far more for our conversion to each other. Bless us, O God ! that thy way may be known upon earth. We do need a day when all the families of the true Israel shall mourn apart as one that mourneth for an only son, over our unhappy divisions, and shall pray God to restore the lost unity of the Church. The very fact that none call for such a season of humiliation, shows the apathy that prevails in regard to the evil of our dissensions, and the observance of it would awaken us out of it, and call down the light and blessing we so greatly need for our deliverance. We may discuss questions of unity and only provoke more controversy, suggest plans but to awaken suspicion and draw forth ridicule, and faint with the desire for peace, yet die without the sight of it, unless God interpose for us ; and nothing would be more like-

ly to move his interposition, than a day of humiliation, kept the wide world over, wherever there are saints that love the Lord. When a single individual in England some years ago, proposed a concert of prayer for the conversion of the world, multitudes of every denomination assented, and are still obeying his loving behest; and there are millions of pious souls that would hail a like call to humiliation on account of our divisions, and earnestly obey it. There is now an intense longing among many of every name for that union for which we plead; and if two or three shall prevail when they agree in asking for any thing, how much more shall two or three millions prevail in pleading with one heart for that for which the last prayers of Jesus were offered, and for which he still intercedes. Let the fathers of every church select a day; let it be, if they approve of the suggestion, the day on which Christ's blood was shed, or any other that may be better, as the season when all shall be invited to humble themselves before God, for those divisions which have rent that church which should have been, like Christ's seamless coat, unrent. Let those aged men who have outlived the stormy passions which tend to strife, who have risen above sect and party, and who are anxious, like their divine Lord, to leave a legacy of peace ere they are taken away, command such an observance. None can doubt the propriety of going so far in an effort towards union. We shall all be as one in lamenting before God our unhappy divisions, and in imploring Him to restore peace to the Church; and when He sees us so united in humiliation and prayer, all other desired results may be looked for in enlarged faith and hope. This inveterate

and malignant evil spirit of discord which has rent the Church so long, goeth not forth but by prayer and fasting.

CHAPTER V.

PLANS AND BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN UNION.

“Can two walk together except they be agreed?”—*Amos 3 : 3.*

IN the present state of things among Christians, it is premature to offer any scheme by which all may be one. Cavillers declare that it is utterly impracticable to find any basis of union, and so treat the discussion of the point, or any movement towards it, as visionary. The time has not come for any definite plan. Christians are not prepared for it. Any suggestions with regard to it only awaken controversy. The wound must be thoroughly cleansed ere its lips can be brought together. All that will be offered here will be mere general views in which all can agree. The thoughts upon the subject contributed now by one and another may be only as the drift-wood from a distant, happy land, pointing the thoughtful observer, as he looks over the dark waters of strife, to the existence of a world, known perhaps in old traditions, long lost sight of, but destined again to be reached, and prompting some one hereafter to seek a pathway to its shores. The final discoverer of a plan of union that shall be adopted, will be worthy of more honor than he who finds a new continent. But

probably here as elsewhere in all great movements, progressive steps and hints from various quarters will throw such light upon the difficult problem, that the last and successful suggestion will follow as a matter of course, so that if not made by one, it would be by another. Thus does our God stain the pride of human glory, by making great discoveries the result of his own providential leadings, and of the actings of many minds, rather than of the wisdom or researches of single individuals.

Two propositions lying at the foundation of Christian union will meet with general assent. The first is, that we must aim at such a fellowship in the Church, as will make us fully and cordially recognize each other in doctrine, ministry, discipline, sacraments, and mode of worship, so that distinctive names may be done away, and all may be one in visible as well as spiritual union and communion. And the second is, that to gain such union, Christians must be ready to sacrifice, if need be, all that is not held as of conscience towards God.

The first of these is so evident as to need no further discussion. If we are to have only a courteous recognition of each other, an alliance offensive and defensive against some common foe, an occasional meeting on some common platform, we may as well stand as we are; for this comes not up to the gospel requirement, will not satisfy God or man, nor draw down that divine blessing which we need. Whether or how far Christian union would demand an entire obliteration of all that is distinctive, may be a question; but certainly there must be a full recognition and fellowship, so that ministers could exchange or be called to any pastoral charge, so that the people could worship and commune

as freely in any church as they do now in their own, and so that, in evangelizing the world, a missionary should be the missionary of the whole body, sustained as freely by one as by another, and with no rival standard in the field. Past efforts have been in a great measure failures, because they were partial in the remedies proposed, which were such as reached not the real evil, would effect no true reconciliation in the family of Christ, and so could not satisfy nor obtain the blessing of the great Head of the Church.

Our second point is also evident enough as a mere abstract proposition. Whether opposing views are not equally held as matters of conscience, or whether Christians would, for the sake of peace, actually sacrifice things highly valued, though not held as of divine obligation, remains to be seen. Certainly, if Christians of one persuasion hold certain things to be of divine authority, while those of another do not so regard them, but yet would not deem them to be so opposed to the mind and express will of God, that they could not in any case worship or have fellowship with those who hold them, the latter class would not deserve the name of Christians if they would not yield to the former, when, by so doing, they could help to restore unity to the Church. The concession must be made as to weak brethren.

But, passing by the discussion of any general plan or basis of union, as something for which Christians are not yet prepared, the questions to which attention will be invited in the remainder of this work will be, what claim has the Protestant Episcopal Church to take the initiative, as she has done, in a movement towards Church unity? and, what advantages does she offer, as

a nucleus and rallying-point of union among evangelical Christians ?

To a conscientious Episcopalian, his own Church will, in the main, of course appear best fitted to take the lead, and to be the gathering-fold, in gathering into one the scattered and divided flock of Christ. If there were to be a convention of Christians of all denominations, for the purpose of settling upon some plan of union, a Churchman, if present, would set forth the special advantages and claims of his own Church, pleading for it in all its essential characteristics, as the Church for all, while a Presbyterian or one of any other name would do the same for his Church, advocating its adoption ; and then the question would be, which system was most scriptural and worthy of being received, or what could be given up in one, and adopted by another, without any sacrifice of conscience, so as to form a basis of union upon which all could agree.

Something like this will be the guiding thought in what shall be said in the ensuing pages, in reference to the Episcopal Church, in her position towards Christian union. If her claims and advantages, in respect to that great work and end, be set forth in all humility and charity, with a just appreciation of all that is good in every other pale, it may be hoped that the thoughtful, and candid, and lovers of peace, will give a kindly hearing, nor think it at all strange that a Churchman should regard his own Church as the fitting, or even as the destined repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. Circumstances have placed the Episcopal Church in this country under such clouds of prejudice and misapprehension, that many will deem the mere proposal of our second question as presump-

tion, who yet, if those clouds were removed, would be the first to exclaim, This is the home we need ; here will we dwell, for we have a delight therein.

The points of difference between us and other Protestant Churches have been handled by able divines in volumes of learned investigation and discussion. To these reference can be had by such as wish for fuller information on the subjects of which they treat. The line of thought pursued here will be rather to show the fitness of the Episcopal Church to be a gathering home for all, than to defend her distinctive features. It is to be regretted that, in regard to these, we have suffered from two classes of their exponents, both disqualified, in a measure, for their work. On the one hand, we have had those who have held the most ultra and exclusive views of Episcopacy, and who have set them forth in a tone so offensive to their brethren of other names, with whom perhaps they were once associated, as at once, by their arrogance, to repel inquiry. And, on the other hand, the points of difference have been treated as of so little consequence, that those without have gathered from those within our fold, that it mattered little whether our distinctive views were held or not ; and so again inquiry has been repressed. If one could speak on these points, therefore, without arrogant exclusiveness, and yet with the strongest convictions in favor of the Episcopal Church, he would have some special qualifications for pleading her cause in the questions now proposed for consideration, and might hope for a friendly hearing. The evidence of any such qualification in the writer must be sought for in the succeeding chapters of this book,

CHAPTER VI.

CAUSES WHICH HINDER THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH FROM APPEARING IN A JUST LIGHT AMONG OTHER PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS.

“Who made thee a prince and a judge over us?”—*Exod.* 2 : 14.

THE Episcopal Church in these United States suffered greatly in the early period of its history, from its connection with the Church of the mother country. The embittered resentments of old controversies, the remembrance of wrongs from an established Church, the exasperated feelings of the War of the Revolution, and the fact that many of the loyalists and tories of that struggle were Church of England people, were all visited upon our communion, and for long years kept us in disfavor and depression. That members of the Episcopal Church in good proportion and with much honor bore their part in the struggle for liberty, and that the prejudice alluded to was unjust, may be easily proved. We furnished a Washington, but not an Arnold, for the Revolutionary contest. The first prayer in Congress was made by an Episcopalian, which shows that the feelings of intelligent patriots then could not have been very hostile towards us. Among the distinguished laity of the Episcopal Church of Virginia alone, during the Revolution, in addition to Washington, may be named, Patrick Henry, the two Lees, Mason, Pendleton, Lyons, Carrington, Fleming, Grayson, the Nelsons, Meades, Mercers, Harrisons, Randolphs, and hundreds

more, dear to Virginia. No men in all the colonies, says Dr. Baird, entered more warmly than these into the War of the Revolution, and the same remark will hold proportionately true in relation to churchmen of that time in other States.

That there is nothing in our Church hostile to republican institutions, may be proved by recalling a few of our distinguished names, against which patriotism will offer no exceptions. Washington and Jay among revolutionary characters, Washington, Madison, Monroe, Harrison, Tyler, and Taylor, as Presidents, Taylor and Scott as soldiers, Webster and Clay, (both of whom made a sacramental profession of religion in the Episcopal Church,) as Statesmen, Marshall and Kent among jurists, Irving and Cooper and Sigourney among popular writers, are names that have reflected honor upon our land, and enough, considering how small our numbers have been compared with those of other Churches, to wipe off the slander that we "have done nothing for the welfare of our glorious country." Some of these were late adherents of the Episcopal Church; but their testimony is none the less strong, for it proves that in their matured judgment there was nothing in our system conflicting with patriotism. Great names in the political world are not, indeed, usually of much worth in the Kingdom of Christ. These are given because they are worth as much as any other, and to repel an aspersion and meet a prejudice.

Another popular cavil against us is drawn from our alleged sympathy with Rome, and tendency towards her errors. We are placed in the midst of denominations, with whose usages many of our own are in wide contrast, and it is easy to urge the cries of "Popish

Mass Book," "Rags of Popery," &c., among those who only know that Episcopalians have a Prayer Book, Organs, Surplices, painted church windows, and Crosses. It should be answer enough to such cavils to point to the stand our Church took at the Reformation. England, the home of our common ancestry, was converted from Romanism by Episcopalians. By the labors and blood of English Bishops and martyrs alone, was the English Reformation won and sealed, and by their efforts the larger portions of the world where pure Protestantism now prevails, received the glorious inheritance of a reformed faith. Surely our brethren should not speak slightingly of Episcopacy as an antagonist of Popery, when under her banners that great victory, which has made other victories bloodless and easy, was gained. We appeal to history, from the days of the Armada, when Popery rose in wrath against one Queen of the Church of England, down to the days of Pius IX., and Cardinal Wiseman, when its efforts were renewed against another Queen of the Church of England, to show that Rome has ever regarded that Church as the great bulwark of Protestantism. We appeal to what has recently taken place in Ireland, where a single Diocese with a Bishop and Clergy, as evangelical as any, numbers its converts from Popery by tens of thousands, to prove that we have not lost our power as successful antagonists of the great enemy. We appeal to our XXXIX Articles, more than half of them directly protesting against the errors of Papacy, as further evidence that we have no sympathy with them. We have reason, indeed, to believe that multitudes, in forsaking the corruptions of that false faith, find a more congenial home among us,

than among those, who, in their abhorrence of Rome, have gone to opposite extremes; but this argues no affinity with Rome.

If it be objected that some from our Church have recently gone over to Rome, we reply, True, but the army nearest the conflict will suffer most from desertions. We regard that which is now taking place as the last great struggle with Popery. We expect that in this sifting season, when God calls his people to come out of Babylon, and they obey by thousands, that a few who were not truly of us may go in and be partakers of her plagues. Such is the law of affinities in the Kingdom of Christ.

But further, in a large majority of cases, those who have gone over from us to Rome, have been educated among our Protestant brethren. We think there is something in their system which tended to unsettle these perverts, or, more charitably perhaps, that once unsettled, they were ready for further change, or that they were of the class that are ever ready to change. We are sure that there is nothing in our Church system favorable to inconstancy in its faith. Rarely does one well educated in it forsake it. The stability of our Liturgy imparts itself to those who worship in it. This is proved by the fact that only one Episcopal Church, and that not truly an exception, ever, in this country or in England, lapsed to Unitarianism, while from among our brethren such defections are to be reckoned by hundreds. The same is true with reference to Universalism, and the sect called Christians. Our Church has not been the reservoir whence they have largely drawn. Our people are not given to change. Such a thing thirty years ago as a perversion to Popery would

have electrified our whole community. But there was a day when our Church began to rise rapidly. Others looked towards it as a peaceful home, and flocked to us by hundreds and thousands. Prosperity elated us and we needed chastisement. Those who came to us passed often to Rome, and so were made the rod of our chastisement. In the mercy of God the evil is nearly removed, and our Church comes out of the trial purified and strengthened, having shown her power to cast out Romanizing teachings within, as well as to resist Rome without. This is our version of the matter, and it leaves good our claim to be as strongly antagonistic to Popery as any other Protestant body.

It is sometimes urged against us that we are behind other Protestant bodies in the great work of missions. We acknowledge our deficiencies considered in their relation to duty to God; but confess none in the contrast with the labors of our brethren. The oldest Protestant Missionary Society in the world had its origin among Churchmen, and is still vigorously sustained by them. The first religious service and administration of the Lord's Supper by a Protestant, or perhaps by any other in North America, about forty or fifty years before the landing of the Pilgrim fathers, was by an Episcopal minister; the first Protestant Church within the limits of what is now the United States, was Episcopal, and the first religious service in New England, as well as in Virginia, was held by an Episcopal minister. We hope that those who were first to take possession of the land in the name of the King of kings, may be found doing their part in retaining it for Him, as well as in setting up His Kingdom throughout the world. Recently a minister of our Church was the first,

for centuries, to hold Christian services in Japan, and a call is made to follow up his beginnings. Another has since gone to explore the same field.

It is well known that the strength of our brethren in this country in years past, for missionary resources, has been in New England, and from that rich mine our Church has been, until recently, almost excluded. Puritan bigotry and intolerance drove Episcopalians from that field, and for a great while our few scattered parishes there were overtopped and shaded by what was in fact an established and a persecuting Church. We are now gaining ground there rapidly, insomuch that our growth under the circumstances is astonishing to ourselves. As we rise from that depression, and from other adverse influences, we hope that our people will take the foremost rank in the missionary work. Indeed, from Dr. Baird's statistics, it would appear already that the Episcopal Church in the United States, in proportion to her communicants, contributed for Foreign Missions, as compared with the Presbyterian Church, one dollar and twenty cents to one dollar; as compared with the Methodist, ten dollars to one; as compared with all others together, two dollars to one. In the deadliest clime of the world, that of Africa, we have had two missionaries to one of any other Protestant denomination. These facts, and the noble enterprise of the Church of England in her Colonial Missions, as well as the movements now going on for the masses in the mother country at home—movements headed by zealous Bishops, and seconded by zealous Presbyters, of which latter a single Rector has added about one new Church a year for thirty years, for the accommodation of the destitute of a large city, show that there

is nothing in our system unfavorable to the fullest development of the missionary spirit.

Another common charge against us is, that our members are greatly wanting in personal and experimental piety. It will be allowed that there have been many excellent men among us; but, on the whole, compared with other bodies of Christians, we are regarded as deficient in vital religion. The Episcopal Church, it is said, is a fashionable Church, a Church for gentlemen, a Church in which there are no revivals, few decided conversions, little belief in a change of heart, much formalism, &c. Whether there be a comparatively low standard of piety among us, God alone can truly judge. "We have none to boast of," was the reply of Bishop Griswold, when told that there was little vital godliness among Episcopalians. We know not why there should not be true piety among us. We have more of the reading of the Scripture in our public worship than any others. All the doctrines of grace are as clearly set forth in our formularies as in those of our brethren of leading Protestant Churches, and in almost the same words. And, as to the preaching of Christ crucified, it was recently asserted by an eminent layman among the Dissenters in England, that there was more of it in the worst Tractarian pulpits of the Establishment, than in those of old Churches of other bodies, once occupied by their most prominent divines. Whether this be so or not we will not dispute; but this we may say, that our Liturgy compels us to follow Christ, year by year, in all his offices and work, from his incarnation to his death, resurrection, ascension, and gift of the Holy Ghost; and that, as it is usual for our ministers to adapt their preaching to the service for the day, every great

truth of the gospel must come up for explanation and enforcement once at least in each year; and also that, being so occupied, there is less danger of their wandering off to abolitionism, political topics, and the semi-secular subjects of the day. We might appeal again to the fact, that a large portion of the standard theological works in every library, and in every closet of devotion, as well as of Sunday-school books, were written by Episcopalians, in proof that our system is not unfavorable to piety. We might mention the names of Hall and Scott, Leighton and Martyn, Legh Richmond and Newton, with a host besides, and ask, if they found room enough for such attainments in holiness in our Church, whether it can be possible that its natural tendency is to blight and dwarf the plants of grace in the believer's soul. The holiest of them would testify, as the result of his experience, that he could conceive of nothing better adapted to further experimental godliness than the right use of our Liturgy. If there be not among us all that can elsewhere be found to promote the great work of conversion and sanctification, we should say of our Church, with its bitterest foes, "Raze it, raze it even to the ground."

We are probably misjudged on the points just referred to, because we do not use the terms or the means which are common among our brethren. We believe in a conversion from sin to holiness, and from the power of Satan unto God, wrought by the Holy Spirit. But we attach very little importance to such marks of conversion as the being able to tell its date, or to speak of the deep convictions of sin, or the raptures or assurance that attended it; but judge of it, so far as we are called to judge, by its fruits in the life. We do

not examine candidates for the Lord's Supper as to their experience, though ready to aid them when guidance is sought, but endeavor, in all our teaching, to show what the Christian life is, and then put them upon St. Paul's rule, Let a man examine himself, and so let him come. If we are asked how many have been converted among us, we answer, God only knows. To decide such a question would be to assume the office of the Judge in the great day. We take men on their own profession, unless they be living in open and gross sin. God has given to no one the responsible office of opening or closing the door of the Church, on a supposed knowledge of the hearts of his fellow-men. And to speak of so many as converted in times of revival has no warrant in God's word. The Scripture expressions are "that so many were added to the Church, or so many baptized," and we follow its cautious language. We seek to have a revival, or, since revival implies preceding death, we seek rather to maintain a true religious life, all the year round, deeming that a healthy state of the Church, when accessions are continually made to it, and that a diseased state, when large numbers are gained at one time, with coldness for the rest of the year. We have, however, in our Lenten observances, those protracted services which all seem to crave at some time in the year, with every advantage of fastings and increased devotions, and with all the recollections of the Saviour's sufferings, as at that time endured for us, to quicken our penitence and prayers. Nor does it ever fail but that, when the Church system is faithfully carried out, large numbers feel the enlivening power of such services; believers are edified, and many added to the Church.

It argues much in favor of our Church, that, notwithstanding all these popular prejudices against her, and the depressing circumstances of her early origin in this country, her growth has been so rapid, and the leaven of her influence upon other religious bodies so largely felt. The statement recently put forth in the Puritan Recorder, published at Boston, concerning the comparative growth of the Episcopal Church in New Haven, shows that thoughtful men of other names are struck with the evidences of vitality and progressive power in our system. In that city, the stronghold of Puritanism, with the most flourishing college in the country on its side, with a theological school, and an array of the ablest men in the land, and with the advantage of a start far in advance, and of long and almost undisputed possession, the Congregational Church in thirty years has gained no new place of worship, has retrograded in the number of its members, though the population has nearly quadrupled, while the Episcopal Church, from a single edifice, has grown to have as many places of worship as the Congregationalists, with a proportionate increase of its communicants. There must be some elements of power in a system which, on such a field, has made such progress.

And the pervading influence of our Church among bodies numerically so much stronger, and so strongly prejudiced, shows the same elements of power. The keeping of Christmas, once opposed, has become almost a national observance. The Easter holidays, in almost every portion of the country, are acknowledged in schools and families, and even in public engagements of business. Good Friday is openly commended by leading divines of other names, and the restoration of

its observance commenced The increasing use of organs, of prose chants, of clerical vestments, of liturgies, and the adoption of our style of church architecture, and even the erection of crosses on churches, to all of which there was once violent opposition, shows the power of truth in overcoming unreasonable prejudices, and speaks loudly for the quiet energy and strength of our Church.

A movement from us towards Christian union is regarded sometimes with suspicion, as an attempt to make all Episcopalians, and sometimes with derision, in that we, who are ranked among the smallest of evangelical bodies, should presume to move in the matter, unless it were to join ourselves with some of those around us, and be absorbed among them. We avow our desire and hope to make all Episcopalians, so far, at least, as our ministry substantially is concerned; for, without this, not one among us dreams of union. And, with regard to the smallness of our body, to say nothing of the weakness of the argument from numbers, when we consider the whole Protestant world, and take the Church of England, the Moravians, and the Churches of Northern Europe, into the account, it will be seen that we are not so insignificant in numbers as to make it our duty to be silent. Nine-tenths, yea, ninety-nine-hundredths, of the whole body of Christians, from the earliest ages to the present day, have undoubtedly been Episcopal in form. None can gainsay this assertion.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH NOT SCHISMATIC.

"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."—*Ps. lxxxvii. 3.*

IT has been thought by some among us, that in the adoption of a plan of Christian union, our Church could safely make concessions on certain points, and would do so if other Churches respond to overtures for union. But leaving these concessions for discussion when occasion shall call for the offer or yielding of them, we are ready to ask, Why is not the Episcopal Church, as she now is in the main, fitted to raise the standard, and to be the rallying point of union among all evangelical Christians? And having met some of the prejudices against us, in the following pages of this work an attempt will be made further to answer the inquiry, What claims and advantages has she in this respect, and for this office?

We answer, First, that the Episcopal Church is not, and has never been, in a state which any Protestant could pronounce to be a state of schism.

That there are schisms is clear. All the multitudinous forms of religious organization among us cannot be guiltless of the charge. We are taught by our Church, however, to pray to be delivered from heresy and schism, but not very particularly to define their marks and limits; to hate heresy, as Coleridge expresses it, but to call no man heretic. We pretend not therefore to say, in all cases, though we need not

hesitate in some, who are schismatics and heretics, but we assert for ourselves, that the Protestant Episcopal Church is not schismatical nor heretical. She may, in some measure, have been guilty of causing divisions by the want of a spirit of concession, and it is generally acknowledged among us now, that much of that which was asked, when separations from her took place, might have safely been yielded, though indeed it is doubtful whether the yielding, as the spirit of the times then was, would have satisfied or preserved unity. The American Episcopal Church would have been one to which the objections urged by the early Dissenters from the Church of England, and by the followers of Wesley, against that body, would not have applied, and probably ours would have been a home that they would not have left. And the question cannot but arise, whether, upon the whole, the cause of Christ has gained any thing by the separation? Good may have resulted in some quarters, but when we look at the endless divisions and subdivisions of those who separated, and the gross heresies into which some portions of them have run, it is more than probable, that if the whole Reformed Church of England and America had remained united, every rightful concession would have been yielded, and the whole body would have been more pure and prosperous than it now is. Separation, except in extreme cases, is a poor and unscriptural remedy for evils, and little conducive to growth and health. Have we a sounder faith any where than that of Cranmer and Ridley, of Jewel, and Latimer, and Hooper? If we, who trace our descent from the English Reformation, could stand as the Church was, in point of unity, in their day, would not all confess it a

desirable position ? Whatever concord might not have effected, it could scarcely have resulted more deplorably than division.

But however this may, or might have been, of actual schism the Protestant Episcopal Church cannot be accused. The Anglican Church, from which we are derived, if not planted by St. Paul, was established long before the Papal apostacy. It nobly, and for a long time successfully, resisted Romish encroachments, was restive under the Papal yoke, and at last threw it off, by the united act of a National Church. Very few among Bishops, Clergy, or people dissented from that act until it was fully consummated, so that the English Reformation was no more a schism than the overthrow of Jack Cade was a rebellion. The Church carried her ministry, her doctrines, her worship, her people, with her. She was not indebted to the corrupt Church of Rome for her Episcopate, nor did Rome take it from her. An uninterrupted succession of her Bishops can be traced back to the pure ages of the Church. If the Anglican Church passed under the Papal yoke, and through its pollutions, it no more vitiates the apostolic derivation of her ministry than the Jewish High Priesthood was vitiated by the Babylonish captivity, or the sway of Pagan Rome. If there were wicked men in the one succession, there was also an Annas and a Caiaphas in the other ; yet Paul owned Caiaphas as God's High Priest, and our Lord received the ministrations of the Temple from the hands of his murderer. We claim, therefore, that the Episcopal Church of England and America is not, and has never been, in a state of schism. As these bodies are now, so they were in the days of Cranmer and Latimer, so they were in the

second century, before the close of which it is certain that Britain had received the Gospel, if not even earlier, and from apostolic hands.

Now can it be expected that this Church will depart from such a high position? Is it not rather to be looked for, that those who have separated from her should return to her? The suggestion may awaken resentment, but let it be calmly considered. Here is a Church which has stood from the apostolic age, corrupted at one time in point of doctrine, but regaining soon its original faith, with a ministry unbroken and ever the same in its orders, and with forms of worship handed down from remote antiquity—a Church among the latest in submitting to the power of the Seven Hills, and, in her Wickliffe, the earliest in the Reformation—a Church enrolling all the martyrs to Popery in England among her members, as well as all the early Reformers there—and a Church, never in all those centuries, nor at the present day, rent into rival bodies, each claiming to be the true Episcopal Church. Has not such a Church some right to take the lead in the work of Christian union? Has she not some right to expect that those who have separated from her should return, rather than that she should go to them? The Romish Church presses a similar plea with great success. If her corruptions did not raise an insuperable barrier, her success ought to be complete. We therefore, who can plead unity, and freedom from schism, without corruptness in doctrine, and with the removal of all that originally caused separation, ought not to be considered presumptuous, in proposing our Church as the rallying-point of union, nor in inviting those who have gone out from her to return.

To visit upon us, as a plea for continued separation, all the bitter remembrances of the past, would be most unreasonable. The contest of our forefathers was not about doctrine or the ministry, so much as concerning clerical vestments, organs, the sign of the cross, the style of church-windows—things which appear to us now ridiculous as the themes of such bitter controversy. If there was persecution of Dissenters, there was as shameful persecution by Dissenters. If thousands of the latter left their homes for freedom to worship God, a freedom they allowed not to others in their new home, thousands of conscientious clergy of the Church of England were driven from their altars and their homes when their enemies were in power. If there have been days of fox-hunting clergy in the Mother Church, there was in New England itself, before the great revival, as it is termed, a state of formalism and spiritual death but little better. If Bunyan was imprisoned by Churchmen, Calvin burned Servetus, and Puritans hanged Quakers, and an English reviewer asserts that if Bunyan had opened his conventicle on New England soil, he would have been imprisoned there. There is not much to boast of in the way of tolerance, on any side, in the past. And to perpetuate feuds and divisions by its remembrances, would be as wise as to cut off trade and kindly intercourse with England, because of her mistakes, or cruelties at the Revolution. In the position the Episcopal Church in this country now occupies, let her claims be judged, and, so viewed, the assurance that she is not schismatical must have weight with all who have a scriptural judgment of the sin and evil of schism.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, IN DOCTRINAL SOUNDNESS AND
EXPRESSION, ACCEPTABLE TO ALL.

"Her clothing is of wrought gold."—*Ps.* xlv., 13.

THE doctrines of the Episcopal Church, as embodied in her standards, are so evangelical, and set forth with such moderation, and with such a liberal spirit, that in this view she may well be the rallying-point of all true Christians, in the restoration of unity to the Church of Christ.

It will not be disputed that all the great truths of Redemption, as they are received by evangelical bodies of Christians, are to be found in our Creeds and Articles, and that our Liturgy contains only wholesome doctrine. A layman, for membership among us, must assent to the Apostles' Creed, as construed by the Nicene, and to this he could hardly object, whatever his denomination, if retaining the great truths of the gospel; while ministers, not of our Church, have often said, they should have no hesitation in subscribing to our XXXIX Articles. If the latter, however, were an obstacle to union, the ancient Creeds might give an ample and unobjectionable foundation for it.

The vital doctrines of our holy religion are, moreover, held among us, with the very best safeguards against corruption and change. We make no boast of stability, for we remember that Apostolic Churches were threatened with the removal of their candlesticks

ere Apostolic utterance was silenced in the grave. Christ, walking in the midst of the golden candlesticks, can alone uphold them. Nevertheless, one Church may have securities for permanence above another, and here we think the advantage is with us. Our doctrines are so interwoven with our Liturgy as to make of all one piece, no part of which can well be changed without destroying the whole, and so that our daily worship perpetuates our faith. Heresy cannot enter our pulpits but through our desks, where its way is barred by an orthodox Liturgy, which one could not well kneel and use, to rise and immediately contradict in his teaching; or, if he did, the contrast would at once condemn him. An intelligent layman of the Congregational Church said to an Episcopalian, "I can see a great advantage in your Liturgy. Our place of worship in this town," said he, "was formerly that now occupied by the Unitarians. Its members were originally all Trinitarian, and its large endowments were given for the maintenance of Trinitarian doctrines. But we called a pastor who became tinctured with Unitarianism. In his prayers he gradually left out, as he could easily do in extempore devotions, all that savored of the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement, and in his preaching he as gradually introduced liberal sentiments, as they were termed, until by this process he had undermined the faith of a majority, by whose vote he was sustained in his teachings, and the property secured, leaving the orthodox minority to go elsewhere, to organize and build anew. Now," said he, "if that pastor had been obliged to use your Liturgy, he could not have done this. He could not, as an honest man, have invoked the holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity as three persons,

and one God, in the Litany, nor made confession in the communion office of faith in Christ's perfect satisfaction on the cross, and then immediately, in the pulpit, contradicted his own devotional utterances. He must have gone elsewhere with his false teachings, and we should have retained our Church, endowments, and people." It was a truthful and striking acknowledgment. "Wo to the declining Church which has not a scriptural Liturgy," says Dr. Buchanan. Even if a pastor among us becomes unsound in faith, or is defective in piety, he cannot change the Liturgical forms. They remain the same. He soon passes away; and then another succeeds, finding all ready to his hands, while elsewhere, as in the case above cited, every thing falls with the fall of the pastor.

The process of defection, as described in that case, has been repeated in Churches not Episcopal, in hundreds of instances. Of two hundred and sixty parishes, established in glory in the days of Cromwell, two hundred and forty are now Unitarian. The pulpits of Calvin and Doddridge are so perverted. How many scores of Churches have gone over to the same form of error in our own New England, we will not seek to enumerate. It is a theme we love not to dwell upon. We turn to our own people, and find that but one Episcopal Church edifice in this country was ever alienated to Unitarians, and that we have lost but two or three of our clergy in that direction. And the same steadfastness in the fundamental doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement has been witnessed in the Church of England. Now here is a remarkable fact. A century and a half ago, we and those of some other denominations stood on the same platform of faith in regard to

the Trinity and atonement. They have lapsed by thousands to a heresy utterly abhorrent to their pious ancestors, while we stand fast. Property to the amount of millions has gone with them to support teachings which its donors would have endured martyrdom rather than furthered. Churches, with them, that once echoed the praises of the adorable Trinity, now hear ascriptions to the only wise God alone, while in ours the glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as uttered in the beginning, is now, and, we trust, ever shall be uttered, world without end, Amen. We claim that, under God, our Standards and Liturgy have been the barriers that have kept out that tide of fearful error from us, while the defences of our brethren have been so swept away. And if this be so, it furnishes a strong reason why we should not leave these our defences, and why others should rather come with us, behind them. For what is Christianity without the Trinity and atonement? or who can look at such a defection without searching eagerly for a remedy, and grasping at any that seems likely to stay the plague of such a heresy?

And we have another security against error. The observance of Festivals and Fasts is well calculated to give stability in the doctrines specially connected with them. What child, taught to keep Christmas, will be likely to forget or doubt the incarnation of the Eternal Son? Who that passes through the solemnities of Passion Week and Good Friday, will readily part with his belief in the atonement? Whitsunday gives its yearly impress to the truths pertaining to the office of the Holy Spirit, and Trinity Sunday helps to answer its own prayer in the Collect for the day, that we may

be kept firm and steadfast in this faith of the Trinity. So evident is all this, that some of other denominations have urged and commenced the observance of Good Friday, on the ground, not only that there could be no doubt as to the season of our Lord's death, nor of the propriety of commemorating it, but also as a means of reviving a waning faith in the vicarious sacrifice of the Eternal Son of God.

Add to this the fact, that our clergy do generally, as a matter of choice or of duty, preach upon the great truths set forth in the Liturgy, on the days in which they are specially brought to view, and we have therein another strong anchor for stability in doctrine. Our ministers do not select their subjects under the impulse of the moment, presenting favorite themes according to their individual tastes, neglecting those that are important, introducing political topics rather than gospel verities; but the Prayer-Book gives them each Lord's Day some great truth of Redemption; and as the preceding devotions prepare the way for it to make a right impression, our clergy feel that they can hardly do better than select it for the subject of their sermon. Good Friday offers us the Atonement, Easter the Resurrection, and so on throughout the ecclesiastical year; and thus devotional exercises and the teachings of the pulpit combine to indoctrinate our people in their most holy faith. There is no law compelling us to choose for our sermons the doctrines of the day, but we find such an advantage in it, that nearly all do it. No vital doctrine of the cross can thus well fail, for any length of time, of being noticed, while the special notice of the day no more lessens our attention to it at other times than the observance of Thanksgiving makes us less

thankful for the rest of the year. "For nothing do we more admire the services of our Church," says Melville, "than for the carefulness displayed that there be no losing sight of the leading doctrines of the faith. It may be said of our clergy, that they are almost compelled by the almanac, if not by a sense of the high duties of their calling, to bring successively before their congregations the prominent articles of Christianity. It is not left to their own option, as it comparatively would be if they were not fastened to a ritual, to pass a year without speaking of the crucifixion, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, of the Trinity, or of the outpouring of the Spirit."

We may be told that we too, notwithstanding our securities, have our defections, viz., towards Rome. Never by whole congregations. And even Rome holds to the Trinity and Atonement, and indeed to every other article of the creed; and errs by adding to and overlaying true doctrine with a mass of error, rather than in denying the truth. That there is no inherent tendency to, or affinity with Rome, has already been shown. And what is the lapse of a few scores in that direction, in a current already checked, when compared with the steady stream which has set from other bodies, for more than a century, towards Unitarianism, bearing whole congregations along with it? The very fact, that Tractarianism is already virtually defunct, is proof that it found nothing congenial among us, and gives a strong argument in our favor; for that must be a healthful body whose wounds are so soon healed. Churchmen are less easily removed from their faith than other Protestants. Our brethren can go from one sanctuary to another, and scarce notice any difference, though the

creed be very unlike ; but it could not be so with our people. We could not listen to Unitarian prayer or preaching for a single service, supposing ourselves at home ; for we should miss our old forms, and our frequent ascriptions to the undivided Three. Once a Churchman, always a Churchman, is the general rule, where there has been any thing like thorough acquaintance with our system. If one is early trained among us, and then for a while broken off from our connection, he usually returns to it. Allowing the faith and worship to be evangelical, this deep-rooting of attachment, and steadfastness in doctrine, are certainly matters of great advantage, and reasons why the Episcopal Church should be made the rallying-point of union.

Episcopalians have often been charged with unsoundness in regard to what are termed "the doctrines of grace." We have lived to see a sad defection in regard to those doctrines, within a single generation, in the very quarters whence we were so accused. One would suppose that an experience like that of Miss Catharine Beecher, as detailed by her in a recent publication, would open the eyes of many of her co-religionists, and lead them to inquire whether there be not, as she says, "some dreadful mistake somewhere," in their system, especially when she claims, and we doubt not truly, that multitudes have found its practical results precisely as in her own experience. She had the doctrines of grace inculcated according to the most approved school of her Church, and by its most distinguished ornaments and teachers. Yet she says, in her melancholy confessions of the effects of such teaching, that she had a sullen feeling of stubborn rebellion against God, and was glad at times that she did not love such a being,

and felt that she would not love him if she could. She was taught to wait God's hour for her conversion, that in some season of revival she might best hope for it, and that she must have a new heart which God alone could give her, but would not, though she seemed to herself greatly to desire it. She felt that all appeared mysterious and cruel on the part of God, though she dared not say so, and strove to feel otherwise. After having made a public profession of religion, her heart revolted, she says, at the prayers, and hymns, and sermons of her own Church, particularly when the expiatory sacrifice of Christ was dwelt upon. And the conclusion of the whole of this remarkable experience and confession is, an avowal of Pelagianism, or of a qualified Unitarianism.

Now we challenge any one to find an experience like this among all the narratives of conversion in God's word. Jesus Christ, in his personal ministry, never left a sinner to stand in sullen despair of help, nor to feel that God was an arbitrary despot whom the sinner would not love if he could. To those who desired to come unto him all was encouraging. Nor was any one under the training of our Church ever left to relate such an experience. Well has that gifted lady said that "there was some dreadful mistake somewhere." We believe that it was that the doctrines of God's sovereignty and grace were presented to her in such a stern, cold manner, with so much more of metaphysical reasoning than of Gospel promise, that it operated as severity in an earthly father does upon a child, to repel and to cause sullen rebellion and hatred. It is said of Calvin that he left one thousand nine hundred sermons, and with a single doubtful exception, the text of not

one of them was from the four Gospels. Had that reformer studied the Gospels more and the Epistle to the Romans less, or rather, had he studied both together, and taught election and reprobation as it is illustrated and exemplified in the life and conduct of Jesus, he might have left a system of theology which would not have resulted so often, as in this instance, in a dreadful mistake, and his own pulpit, so long silent to the honor of the Eternal Son, might still have echoed with the praises of the Sacred Three. There is no truth so high in St. Paul's writings, but that it is embodied in the example of Christ, in the four Gospels, and the glorious knowledge of God is best seen in the face of the Saviour. Our Church, therefore, honors the Gospels above any other portion of the Bible, as is seen by her larger selections from them, and by requiring the people to stand when the Gospel for the day is read, in token of the highest reverence. And our clergy, so far from passing by the Evangelic page, find in it the chief storehouse of their texts and teachings; and the result of all is a religion not cold, repulsive, and metaphysical, but Christ-like, inviting, lovely. What sinner desiring to come to Jesus, ever found any difficulty in approaching him when he was here on earth, or was ever led to hesitate through fear that he was not one of the elect, or that God's time for saving him had not come, or because he could not understand what justifying faith was? No such difficulties arose under the personal ministry of Christ; and his example is the working model of the religion of the Bible. He is the sun of the whole system. We doubt not that there are tens of thousands crowded off by an abstract, frigid theology, into Rationalism and Socinianism, or into the

regions of despair, who would have found their way to the Saviour's feet in a loving confession of all the great truths they now reject, if they had had the Gospel preached to them as it was in the personal ministry of our Lord, or as it is presented in the standards and ministrations of our Church.

Let it be said, however, that sad as are the practical results of the system in which that writer was educated, our sympathies would be with those who taught it rather than with that swarm of Rationalistic Christians which has come up like locusts upon the land, threatening to eat out all that is vital in religion, and to leave us only its husks and stalks; even as we would side with a stern Puritan Father sooner than with the graceless sons whom his mistaken severity had made reprobates. We would rather err with the Calvinist of the highest school, than with the Pseudo-Liberalist who sweeps away the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement, of the inherent and gross depravity of man, of the plenary inspiration of Scripture, and who makes regeneration a mere change of sentiment effected by man's volition instead of a change inwrought by the Holy Spirit of God. But better than the errors of either, are the moderate, encouraging, Scriptural, God-exalting, and man-abasing teachings of our own beloved Church.

How far defection in vital doctrines has proceeded we cannot tell; but the confessions of those within the region of infection are terrible. For ourselves we can say that no one among us thinks of denying the great doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement, of the Eternal Sonship, of man's depravity, of regeneration, and of the plenary inspiration of Scripture. They

are imbedded in our formularies, breathed forth in our devotions, and proclaimed in our pulpits.

On the one point of regeneration it may be thought by some of our brethren that there is unsoundness among us. With regard to this, however, we may say that the language of our formularies upon the subject is almost identical with that of other Protestant bodies, dating back or near to the Reformation,—certainly, it is no stronger in expression. There are differences of interpretation with us, as probably elsewhere. In the essential points, however, we differ not among ourselves, nor from others, viz.: that man is by nature depraved, that he must be created anew by God's Holy Spirit, and that the only safe evidence of renovation is found in holy obedience and growing conformity to the Savior's will and image. There is entire unity of belief among us on these points, and in them lies the substance of the Gospel doctrine of Regeneration.

The characteristic of all our doctrinal statements, is the tone of moderation which pervades them. Our definitions of truth are general, but sufficiently explicit for unity, for over-refining in doctrinal matters, as already stated, leads to and perpetuates strife. Our standards are liberal, yet not to the giving up of any of the great truths of redemption. If there are those among us who are illiberal and intolerant, it is their own fault—not that of our system, or generally of Churchmen. Perhaps we may say that it will ever be the concomitant of a true Church, that there will be those in it who will pride themselves in mere orthodoxy, and condemn others without entering into the spirit of their own Church, for there were such among the Jews.

and yet their error was no argument against the claims of their Church. One of the most attractive features with a great many who come to us from other bodies is found in fact to be the singular moderation that distinguishes our Church, and the happy union of true liberality and conservativeness by which she is marked. As holding sound doctrine, happily secured and well-expressed, we offer her as the centre of union among all evangelical Christians.



CHAPTER IX.

THE MINISTRY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ITS REFERENCE TO CHRISTIAN UNION.

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—
St. Matt. xxviii. 20.

THE claims of the Protestant Church in respect to the ministry are those which, in the eyes of our brethren, present the greatest obstacle to union with us; nay, they charge us with perpetuating schisms by our exclusiveness on that point. If we are conscientiously satisfied that our claims are of divine right and authority, they themselves must allow that we cannot do otherwise than maintain them. And further, if by any means they could be satisfied to receive our orders, and the unity of the Church might be restored thereby, then it is their duty to yield to us on this point, even though contented with their own ministry, and the guilt of perpetuating schism rests on them—not on us.

If we are in conscience bound to our ordination, and they will not undertake to say that it is invalid, it belongs to them to remove the bar to union, by conceding to us a ministry which they with good conscience can receive, and we with good conscience cannot renounce.

It is not proposed to enter here upon any large discussion of the authority for Episcopal ordination. Inquirers on the subject will refer to those learned works which have been issued by able divines, for and against Episcopacy. A few suggestive thoughts, only, will now be presented.

It does not seem at all probable that our Lord left his Church without some duly appointed ministry, and some mode of transmitting it from age to age. No human society was ever organized, and then so left, without officers and a method of securing succession in office. All analogy in God's word is against such an idea. In the Jewish Church, which was a type of the Christian, there were three orders of the ministry, and much pains was taken to guard against an unauthorized intrusion into the sacred office, as may be seen in the case of Korah, Uzzah, and Uzziah. No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest. He commenced not his ministry without a special call and anointing. He waited in silence, as a layman, for thirty years, until he had that outward designation, though surely, if ever mere gifts and the Spirit's presence might have constituted a title to preach, he had it. St. Paul jealously asserts over and over again, his claims to the Apostolic office, and points out the manner of his designation to it, which would hardly have been needful, unless some regular mode of

admission or appointment had been considered necessary, or if mere success, of which none had greater, had been proof enough of apostleship. No one in the days of Christ or of the Apostles, so far as we know, took upon himself of his own motion, the humblest office of the ministry. No body of laymen ever undertook so much as to ordain even a deacon. The idea that any one who has gifts, and feels moved as he supposes by the Spirit of God to preach, can do so, is absurd, unless he can show some sign from heaven in proof of his divine and special call. That any congregation of laymen can set apart a minister, is also absurd. What would it lead to, if fully carried out? Must we receive any one as God's ambassador who has been set apart by any half-score of Christians? Must the female preacher so commissioned be received? Surely Christ must have devised some mode of ordaining and perpetuating a ministry. He can hardly have left things at such loose ends, that any one without a commission clearly derived from him, may take upon himself to minister in sacred things. Who would receive an ambassador without clear credentials? That a man was appointed to that office might be known to himself and to his King, but how are those to whom he is sent to know it? There must be some form or seal of appointment. What is it in Christ's ambassadors? Where shall it be found?

Manifestly we must look for one source of guidance to the usages of the Church near the Apostles' days. The practice under a law immediately after it was given, is the best interpreter of its meaning. All Christians allow this rule in other matters, as in regard to the observance of the Lord's Day, the Canon of Scripture,

and the admission of females to the Lord's Supper. Why should we make the ministry an exception to the rule? We say nothing here of Scripture authority for our mode of ordination; but we find, before the Reformation, Episcopal ordination the general or universal mode. We go back step by step, and find it in existence immediately after the Apostles' days. It exists now, and has existed in churches of most ancient origin. It prevailed among heretics when heresies began. Whence did it originate? How do we account for its wide-spread existence, and among bodies that hold no communion with each other? It was not born of Popery, for churches that anathematize the Pope hold it, and churches that were planted before Popery arose, and churches that for long ages have been secluded from Rome and the Christian world, have had Episcopacy. If it were an arrogant assumption growing with the growth of corruption, why were there anciently no loud protests against it? Gross errors in other cases were resisted step by step. But among orthodox and heretics Episcopacy was adopted, with no clamor against it, when naturally Presbyters, if reduced from an equality to a state of inferiority, would have pleaded loudly against the encroachment. The inference would seem to be that Episcopacy was of Christ's appointment—instituted by him by an easy change, as in many other cases, from the Jewish three-fold ministry—set in order during those forty days in which he remained on earth to speak to his Apostles of the things pertaining to his kingdom, followed by them as appears from many traces in planting churches, and so passing into general use, like the admission of females to the Lord's Supper, and the keeping of the Lord's Day, without resistance or

dissent. It would be hard to account for the early, wide-spread, and almost universal existence of Episcopacy without supposing it had a divine origin; hard to suppose Christ left his Church without any divinely-constituted mode of perpetuating a ministry, and hard to find any that is not Episcopal which has so many marks of antiquity, and of probable derivation from Christ himself.

A great difficulty we encounter in regard to this point is, that many of our brethren pass it by without investigation. Those who set themselves candidly and thoroughly to examine the claims of Episcopacy, do often conclude in its favor. But students in theology are told, that the mode of admission to the ministry is a matter of very little consequence—that Episcopal ordination is good enough, and so is that of other denominations, that the great points are to have the inward call and the visible seals of success, and that any man is a valid minister whose ministry God owns to the salvation of souls. We do not reason so in other matters. That one can skilfully drill a regiment, or lead it valiantly and successfully to battle, does not infer a regular commission, and though men might say no matter whether he has it or not, so long as he contends successfully against the foe, a general would perceive that such a principle would eventually destroy discipline, and endanger a land.

And besides, as we have already seen, Scripture does not make success the sole test of apostleship, nor regard a regular and authorized commission for the ministry as a matter of mere trifling importance. Has Christ in all probability left us a ministry, with a clear mode of designation to it? If so, it is of great moment

to find out what it is, and how it is to be entered. When our brethren content themselves with a sneer at our Episcopal hobby, or at an apostolic succession handed down through Pope Joans and persecuting prelates, we may expect them to rest satisfied with their own ordination, whether obtained as by some Rev. Females, or in that nearest approach to our own mode, by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery in Presbyterian succession from the Apostles' days. But when they ask, Can it be possible that Christ has left his Church without a regularly commissioned ministry and a clear mode of transmitting it—when they reflect that we are indebted to no Pope Joan for our orders, and that even Caiaphas was recognized as God's High Priest—when they look at the ancient, wide-spread, and almost universal existence of Episcopacy, and inquire as to the fact of Bishop Stillingfleet's assertion that there was no Church planted by Apostles that had not Episcopacy, they can hardly fail to have some misgivings that, after all, it may have been of divine appointment, and that there is much ground for the assertion of our ordinal: "It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of ministry in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons." We again disclaim all pretence to any thing like a regular discussion of the subject, and intend only to offer to all these suggestive questions: Could Christ have left his Church without a regularly commissioned and a divinely perpetuated ministry? How can the general and ancient prevalence of Episcopacy be accounted for? Has any other ordination so many probabilities and arguments in favor of its being

the original and scriptural mode? They are practical and common-sense questions, and worthy of a careful answer from any man.

It is something in our favor, that while there may be doubts as to the validity of orders elsewhere, and while some Protestant Churches deny the orders of other Protestant Churches, all Protestants admit the validity of our ordination. Surely it is well to be on the side where there can be no doubt, in the exercise of an office, which no one, with Scripture warnings before him, would venture to take upon himself, save with the clearest call and title so to do, for it is a fearful thing to be Christ's ambassador with the fullest assurance that we are sent of Him, much more to assume the office without His commission. And among all the prevailing modes of ordination, the Church which can offer a ministry admitted by all to be valid, has strong claims, we think, to be the rallying-point of union in the Church of Christ.

It is objected that we are exclusive towards other denominations, and this cavil is used to stir up prejudice against us. Truth is always exclusive. Admit our claims, and it necessarily follows that we should hold, as in our ordinal, that no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon in this Church, except he hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination. We should be justly censurable as inconsistent with our own avowed and conscientious convictions and principles, if, in practice, we made any other ministry as good as our own. Others have been as exclusive on far lower grounds. Congregational associations have voted that it is not proper for their Churches to invite a preacher of any other denomina-

tion to preach in their pulpits on the Lord's Day. Presbyterians, if they abide by their own standards, must reject a Congregational ministry. The Baptists are generally in favor of close communion, and certainly cannot regard any one as a minister of the Church who is not a member of the Church, as no one is, according to their theory, who has not had immersion. Why should we be condemned for acting consistently with our views, when others do the same? The general opinion held among us, and the teaching of our ordinal, no doubt is, that all Protestant bodies not having Episcopacy, are defective as to the ministry; nor is there an intelligent member of our fold, whatever his grade of churchmanship, who desires or hopes for true Christian union and full fellowship with our brethren of other names, except on a reception of Episcopal ordination. They may be eminent in personal piety, successful in labors, and fellow-heirs with us of the inheritance of the saints in light. We may be asked why this is not enough? We answer, if the existence of piety makes one Church as good as another, and should break down all separating walls, then Fenelon and John Joseph Gurney were on an equal footing as to Church claims, and should find equal acceptance in pleading for their respective systems. Sincerity is no equivalent for truth. One may be eminent in piety, unto whom we may desire to show a more excellent way. Because we love our brethren for their eminence in holiness, it does not follow that we must level down Church barriers so as to include them, else we must level till we stand with the pious Friend in all the nakedness of his Church position. Our brethren of other names are more hurt by our alleged exclusiveness, though we al-

low that it is sometimes presented, and especially by those who come in from other folds, in an offensive way, than by any thing else among us. Can they not see force in this reasoning, and will it not disarm them?

It is offered, as a question to be earnestly considered by those of other denominations preparing for the ministry, or already exercising it, whether there be not strong reasons for receiving ordination from - us? "Here," one who is deliberating on the subject may say, "is a Church whose orders are unquestionable, whose doctrinal standards are sound and moderate, whose liturgical forms cannot be a hinderance to piety, since such multitudes of saints have worshipped in them, and since Jesus himself united in a Liturgy,—a Church not rent by schisms, nor dividing upon all the political questions of the day, and a Church in which I can have full scope for all my zeal and devotion. Why should not I enter its ministry? Others in times past have left that Church on very slight grounds, or for causes now in a great measure removed; it may be my duty to help in restoring unity, by returning to it. Everywhere there seems to be an approximating movement towards that Church. Organs, clerical vestments, and such like things, once magnified by my pious forefathers into causes of separation, are now regarded by their descendants with favor. Forms of prayer are advocated by many outside of the Episcopal Church, and if any are to be used, there can be none better than those of the Prayer-Book. An educated ministry gains place among those who once despised it. If ever unity is restored, how can it be but by rallying upon that Church which has the best claim to be the

gathering-point of union? and none can challenge such an honor more confidently than the Episcopal Church. The hope of a general union upon any other portion of the Protestant communion is chimerical. And just at this time, also, I see a movement going on, in the Providence of God, within the Episcopal Church, to make it better adapted to meet the wants of all; and every good man, by coming into its pale, may help to develop its capabilities of being the one true and satisfying home for all. If there be ultraists among Episcopalians, who disgust sober men by their extravagances, I am not obliged to go with them, nor are they the necessary fruits of Episcopacy, but often rather the mistakes of new converts to its ranks. I can be as faithful and successful a minister of Christ in that Church as in any other. I will join it."

Reflections like these have turned the hearts of scores to our ministry, who are now laboring in it with comfort to themselves, and credit to the Church of their adoption. It has rarely happened that a minister has left our ranks, to serve at the altar of any other Protestant Church, but the reverse has been true in scores of instances; and sons of the most distinguished divines of other names, with all the influence brought to bear upon them in their favored homes of childhood, have felt it a duty to seek orders which a loved father's hands must not unite in conferring, though the call of duty was most painful.

The inference from the fact here stated is a very strong one in our favor; for there must have been a deep conviction, founded upon powerful arguments, to have induced them to break through the prejudices of education,—to forsake all the associations of kindred

and Church, to leave which, as some who have had the trial have expressed it, was like death, when those they forsook were comparatively dominant and flourishing religious bodies, and when the Church with which they connected themselves was, in this country, especially in its early years, small, despised, and hated. If there had been but here and there isolated cases of such accessions to our ranks, the argument would not be worth much; but when they are reckoned by hundreds, we should conclude that there were some strong reasons operating upon the minds of these men, and naturally infer that, but for prejudice, multitudes more would feel the force of those reasons, and be led to a like conclusion. The argument cannot be equally applied in the case of perversions to Rome, to favor her claims; for she wins few, and loses a hundred-fold in proportion to her gains, she rewards her proselytes well, she draws by a pompous and showy religion, and she gathers in, for the most part, the weak and unstable; and we can give abundant explanation of change there, which would not at all satisfy in our own case.

Aged ministers of other Protestant bodies have often been heard to say, "It is too late for me to change, but, with my present experience, if I had my life to live over again, it should be spent in the ministry of the Episcopal Church." It may perhaps have been the duty of those aged men still to give the testimony of their example, by such a transfer of their allegiance, the more effective in its influence from their age and experience. We know that we suggest a most painful sacrifice when we ask men to consider the claims of our ministry, and, if they appear reasonable and scriptural, to resolve to enter upon it, particularly when, to their prejudiced

friends, the idea of uniting with the Episcopal Church seems very much like an apostasy to Rome; though, did they read their own standards of doctrine, they would find them as full of Popery as ours. But to the inquiring, and candid, and conscientious, we need hardly say, that the questions of a call and commission to the ministry, of duty to Christ, and of the best means of restoring unity to his Church, are not to be decided by the pleadings of prejudice, or under the influence of kindred affection. When duty calls, earthly ties are not to hinder. We speak thus because we are confident that there must be hundreds and thousands, who are disposed at times to look thoughtfully upon the claims of our Church and ministry, but who are surrounded by many and powerful influences against what we deem a right decision. We are confident that a full and unprejudiced examination of the whole subject would bring them among us, because such has been the result in so many instances, that it is reasonable to infer that many must be kept back by influences which others have surmounted only by great efforts and painful self-sacrifice.

There is a state of things in the Episcopal Church at the present day, most inviting to those whose minds are directed towards her claims. Not only is Tractarianism dying, but party strifes are everywhere frowned upon, and the earnest worker, wherever he may be found, is encouraged, while the desire is universal to make cautiously such changes as will adapt our system more and more to the masses, and to general acceptance. In the Church of England, where, as has already been stated, a single rector has opened about one new Church a year for thirty years, for the accommodation

of the crowded population of a city, and where bishops are leaders in preaching in Cathedrals made free to the working classes, and where men in the highest station go readily to the most unhealthy climes in the work of colonial missions, there is manifested a spirit and energy which must command the respect of all. And the signs are that the whole Anglican Church will soon be entitled, by evangelical zeal, as well as by Apostolic order, to be the rallying-point of union for those among whom she dwells.

Episcopal ordination is now, and probably ever will be, a *sine qua non* of union with our Protestant brethren. But if any denomination were desirous to have a bishop or bishops consecrated from among themselves in our line of succession, to confer orders—if, for instance, the opportunity were now afforded, as when Calvin approved a moderate Episcopacy, and the leaders of Methodism desired it, we trust we should say to our brethren, "We regard our Episcopate as a gift from Christ to the world; take it from us, and use it with no limitation from us, save that such safeguards be adopted that it be not abused to further heresy. The gift on such terms might indeed involve the difficulty of a diocese within a diocese; but that existed when Peter went to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles, and its evils cannot be greater than those of schism; while, moreover, the probability of entire unity would increase, with such a large step towards it as would be gained by oneness in the ministry. We could not be long kept asunder, or have our separate dioceses, if we had a common ordination.

Why will not our brethren then, as individuals or in their collective capacities, take this gift from us, if

the great end of Christian union can be furthered thereby? Is there any thing to prevent such a concession on their part, save some fancied humiliation in the act? And are we to stand, like brothers who have separated, really desiring reconciliation, but ashamed to make the first move, lest it should be construed as an humbling confession, or a triumph on either side? God forbid that any such base emotions should bar the way of peace. Will not our brethren, who see that we can never in conscience give up our ministry, receive our orders, if they can offer no objection to their validity? Even if they cannot take the same views of their divine origin as we, yet, if they can receive Episcopacy as a fact and a matter of expediency, and for the sake of restoring unity to the Church, that would remove our difficulties. If there were any disposition manifested by them in their collective capacities to have the Episcopate, it could no doubt be conferred on terms that would be mutually satisfactory. It is often the case that there is among them a virtual Episcopate, in the ascendancy of some leading men, or the rule of some small number, indicating a natural want of that which we can supply, and which it is far better to supply by legal and regular appointment. We appeal to their own consciousness, and to their experience of the workings of their systems, whether these do not show that every body must have its head, and whether they have not among themselves those who have quite as much pre-eminence over their brethren as is given to our bishops, and whether it would not be better to give that pre-eminence a regular and legal form; and whether an Episcopate, with one raised to it by the free suffrages of the whole body of his Christian brethren, and

with its due safeguards, be not that needed headship? A body without a head is an anomaly we see nowhere else but among them. Every animal body, every state, every army, every college, every society, every corporation, has its head. It may be said, that Christ is the head of the Christian Church: but we reply, so he was of the Jewish Church; and yet, dwelling in glory in the Holy of Holies, he appointed a visible head to that body in the high-priest. There was also a head to the Church at Jerusalem, where James presided, even while the apostles remained there together. See Acts 15: 13-21; 12: 17; 21: 18; Gal. 1: 19; 2: 9, 12, &c. And it seems to us who stand outside of other folds, as if there were utterances from within which speak the want of just such a chief pastor as we find in our bishop, rendering it more probable that God has supplied a natural necessity by such a provision as we find in our diocesan.

And now let us see how large a step the reception of Episcopacy would be towards complete unity in the Church of Christ. It would be the blending of all Protestant Episcopalians with the greater part of those not now Episcopal, in visible union with each other; and though our branch in this country is but small, yet the Church of England in the mother country and its colonies would largely swell the band of brotherhood. The Methodist Episcopacy is already formally like our own, nor can we conceive that our brethren there could object to making it really and truly so. The Moravians are already Episcopal, and so are some other Reformed Churches. Then let us ask, supposing all evangelical Protestants to become Episcopal in point of ordination, how we should stand towards Churches not

Protestant? And, first, in regard to missionary work among corrupt Churches, like the Greek and Armenian, where ordination has for long ages been Episcopal, and whose members are startled by the idea of a Church without a bishop, do not our brethren, now so nobly engaged in missions among them, see that it would give them an advantage, if they could be approached with the same zeal, and with the added assurance that all Protestants were one with them in the orders of the ministry? And then, how would our oneness there affect our position in regard to Rome? She cannot overthrow our orders. Her fable of the Nag's Head Consecration has been abandoned by her own best writers. And suppose that the whole Protestant body be found meeting together in a Council of Reformed Churches—its ministry settled upon the ancient and almost universal basis of Episcopacy, its bishops and ministers all fully recognizing each other, should we not be in a position vastly improved and more hopeful, in respect to that worst hinderer of the Redeemer's cause? Since Protestants became divided, what large conquest have they made of Romish States? Is it not true that our territorial acquisitions in that quarter date far back of our endless divisions?

There are thoughtful, earnest seekers after truth in the Church of Rome. They look for unity as one mark of the true Church, and turn away from us because we have it not. That Church gathers nearly all her converts from us by pointing to our divisions. We can hardly expect that, in a movement towards a reformation, any ministry not Episcopal would satisfy intelligent Romanists. But let them see the whole Protestant body united, with bishops deriving succession from

The Apostles in channels independent of Rome, and we should most certainly stand in a better and more inviting position towards them. This might be the millstone to drag down Babylon the Great. It may be that the doom of prophecy reserved for her is to have the bishops of the various national Churches now under her sway, cast off her yoke, as did the Church of England, reducing the Pope to his original and rightful place, as simply the Bishop of Rome. There are countries now restive under her usurped dominion. Let us unite in one apostolic ministry, such as our Church can give to all, and meet in council, and we could then speak to her and to the corrupt churches of the East in the majesty and strength of unity and truth.

Is there any ministry among Protestants, on which, supposing some of our brethren could with good conscience yield to us, all could so hopefully unite in reference to churches not Protestant, as upon our own? or is there any ministry, in any one Church not Episcopal, that would be as likely to satisfy other churches, not Episcopal, as would ours? If Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, Dutch Reformed, and Congregationalist, were compelled to choose some mode of ordination to which they could all agree, would they not be as likely to find the point of union in our ministry, as in that of any one Church among themselves? Would they not say, All admit the validity of Episcopal orders, we will receive them if we forego our own? It is hopeless to think of a restoration of unity to the rent Church of Christ, until we can be one in regard to the ministry. It is vain to think of the world's conversion, till we all become one in Christ. If we could settle upon a min-

istry which would satisfy all evangelical Protestants, it would leave little else in the way of unity among Protestants, and put us in a position most hopeful towards churches not Reformed. We entreat our brethren, therefore, to consider this subject, to take it up in their collective bodies as we have done, and if there be weight in such considerations as have been here suggested, to yield to them, and to meet us in action, so far as they can do it in good conscience. That we should be ready to make as great concessions in points not deemed of divine obligation, as we ask of others in regard to the ministry, if unity can be attained thereby, cannot be doubted.

CHAPTER X.

THE LITURGY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, IN ITS BEARING UPON CHRISTIAN UNION.

"They lifted up their voice to God with one accord."—*Acts* iv. 24.

THE language of the Preface of our Prayer Book with regard to forms of worship, is liberal enough to satisfy all. It says, that "It is a most invaluable part of that most blessed liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, that in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the faith be kept entire." The whole of that Preface is worthy of an attentive perusal in this connection. Our Prayer Book as it is, we do most deeply cherish and love. Its highest eulogies have often been uttered by those who did not worship in it.

The question has been asked by men of piety looking towards our ministry from other Churches, Whether forms do not tend to cramp and fetter zeal? The answer of experience is, that when we are most devotional our forms are most relished, and seem to leave nothing wanting. Our only difficulty is in rising to such a height of devotion as our forms express. John Newton said, That if he could use the Lord's Prayer, entering into the spirit of every word, he should consider it as the highest devotional attainment of his life. The fact that our Lord worshipped publicly according to forms, and that, so far from seeking novelty or originality of expression as a means of awakening devotion, he adopted in the Lord's Prayer expressions already in use in Jewish Liturgies, though He, if any, could have invented a prayer of his own; and the fact that multitudes of the excellent of the earth have worshipped God in our services, found them promotive of piety, and loved them best when nearest to God, is proof enough that a Liturgy does not necessarily tend to formality. Formalism is a disease of the sinful heart. It may co-exist with a Liturgy. It may also co-exist with the most perfect and fervid expressions of extempore devotion. Forms and extempore prayers are but the altar and the wood of the sacrifice, ourselves must bring the offering and the fire. That devotional fervor which depends altogether upon the galvanizing power of new and exciting expression, must be very defective. If there be piety in the heart, and it be in a lively state, it will find utterance in such language as that of our solemn Litany as freely as in any other channel. Let one try the experiment of bringing to it a heart right with God and prepared to worship, and he will discover

no hinderance to devotion in the Liturgy, but rather that all right feeling will be deepened and strengthened in its use.

Strange as the assertion may sound to our brethren, we do yet have to say, that their extempore mode of worship appears to us, in contrast with our own, exceedingly cold and formal. We have sometimes witnessed among them, and their own religious papers have described pretty much in the same terms, scenes like the following, though we doubt not that there are others far different: We have seen the minister enter the pulpit as one about to commence some secular business, strip himself there of his outer garments, look around upon the congregation for a while instead of bowing in silent devotion, offer a prayer in which there was a great lack of simplicity, a straining after effect, a mixture of preaching and exhortation, read a few verses of Scripture, or omit all reading of God's word—proceed to what was evidently the great concern of the meeting, the sermon—and then offer the concluding brief prayer, during which other ministers present would perhaps be making ready for their departure. We have looked upon the congregation, and seen men walking the whole length of the aisle with their hats on their heads, showing less respect for God's house than they would for their neighbors, while in prayer-time the members of the church were in strange postures, betokening little reverence, and seeming to say that that part was regarded as belonging to the minister alone. We may misjudge, but when we turn from all this to our own churches, where the minister comes in decently habited, where all are taught reverently to kneel and silently implore a blessing as they enter God's

house, where to look around or to turn the back upon the minister in the singing is considered indecorous, where a hat upon the head inside of the doors would denote one not of our flock, where the book and the responses fix the eyes and the attention of the people, giving even the little children something to do, where large portions of God's word are read, and where minister and people bear part audibly in all parts of worship, so that it becomes truly common prayer, we cannot but feel that our Liturgical services are in appearance most devout, fervent, reverent; and that theirs are, in contrast, cold and formal. So strangely do we differ, for they charge our worship with coldness and formality. Certainly they must allow that among us there is more of seeming reverence, and also that habits of reverence tend to further its real existence and growth.

It may be urged, that the forms of our Liturgy are too general, and that particular cases may arise which will demand something more specifically adapted to them. An Episcopal minister once admitted to a minister of another persuasion, that this was a defect in our Liturgy, when the answer was, That is no defect at all, but it is a great excellency in your forms that they are general in their expressions. And, by way of illustration, he gave the following facts from his own experience: A few Sundays since, said he, I had in my congregation two families in affliction desiring the prayers of the church. One of these was a family of great distinction, widely known in Church and State, and specially prominent in all the great religious movements and charities of the day, while the other was a family, respectable but in humble condition of life. The mem-

bers of the latter family took great offence because, in my prayer, I did not, as they thought, dwell so particularly on their bereavement as upon that of their more exalted neighbors. Now, said he, if I had had your general form for families in affliction, I should have saved myself this reproach.

And the admission applies in a great many similar cases. Sometimes it is exceedingly difficult to refer at all to the character of one deceased or to the circumstances under which he died, when a burial service like ours, general in its expressions, having no reference to the dead, and designed only for the living, meets all difficulties and satisfies all. So again with prayers for rulers. Other ministers may pray according to their own party preferences, in terms not very complimentary to a magistrate or fulsome in adulation, but whoever may be in rule, our service follows the divine command to pray for all in authority, asking for them those common and great mercies they so much need, whatever their character, or the party to which they may belong. The particularities of prayer in the extempore mode are probably those which are most and oftenest offensive. The talent for minute description, which so points out the person prayed for, that his name and title might as well have been given, and with the advantage of brevity, though with less of the credit of ingenuity, and the complimentary tone in reference to some individual who is present, with many things of a like nature in extempore prayer, are to us exceedingly objectionable.

All admit that the Lord's prayer, if not given as a form for use, was given as a pattern after which to model our own prayers. And yet how utterly unlike

it in simplicity and directness, are extempore prayers in general! If that be the model, where is there any nearer approach to it, than in the short, terse, full utterances of our collects and prayers. We deem that prayer best for public use which is general in its expressions. Common and general wants alone can be made the subject of public remembrance, while those which are more private and particular, must be remembered in the closet, or at the family altar, or the general expressions used in a public service must be applied by each one to his own special case, as indeed they are in the use of a Liturgy. A thousand persons may say "But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders!" or, "Praise the Lord, O my soul!" each thinking of his own sins, or of his own mercies; and when they join in the same expressions on the next Lord's Day, the thought of some added sin or mercy, may lead them each to breathe them forth with new earnestness and with souls filled with an entirely different train of thoughts and affections. And this is true life and variety in prayer, like as with the foliage of the tree whose beauty does not consist in new and strangely cut leaves changed every day, but in the same from year to year, kept verdant and beautiful by the vital, flowing current within. There are old hymns and tunes familiar as household words, of which we never grow weary. On the contrary, when we are most devotional we love them best, and are offended if some good old words fall upon our ears in any other than the accustomed strains. Why should it not be so in prayer? And we may unhesitatingly affirm that of those general and common wants of humanity, which are the proper subjects for public prayer, many-fold

more are presented to God in a Liturgy like ours, on every occasion of worship, than are usually embodied in any extempore prayers. No man can bring into the latter such a complete but condensed expression of the wants of humanity, as are embodied in our Litany alone.

For the more private devotions of the family, or of small companies of Christians, there is no restriction among us, as to the mode of prayer. We make the use of the Liturgy imperative on occasions of public worship, because all our general wants, such as are fit to be there expressed, can be expressed by it, and to guard in our promiscuous assemblies against those unseemly terms in which God is sometimes addressed when prayer is left to the impulse of the man and the moment. But on other occasions there is liberty. Prayer-meetings, where a few of like mind come together for mutual profit, conducted by laymen, and without forms, are encouraged by some, and can be forbidden by none among us, though the experience of Newton and that of many others among us, and that of the writer, is unfavorable to them. Nelson,* however, one of our best authorities, in his Festivals and Fasts, most universally approved as a standard here and in the old country, strongly commends them. That prayer meetings are not more generally held among us, is to be accounted for partly by the fact that the Liturgy, by giving the laity a share in the worship, satisfies them, so that they desire not any meetings, where they can pray freely indeed, but in language less perfect, and partly by finding from experience that the social prayer meeting has its

* See Nelson's Festivals and Fasts, English Edition, Preface, p. xi.

many and great attendant evils. Those who are most familiar with such gatherings, know full well that the most incompetent are often most forward in conducting their devotions, and that much is witnessed there offensive to good taste and sober piety, so as often to render it doubtful whether the evil does not exceed the good. The best kind of prayer-meeting, if any be had, and one which few ministers among us would not approve, is where some four or five, well known to each other, like-minded, having common wants, as mothers, for instance, meet together unobtrusively in the retirement of some private room (and good forms for such meetings can be found), to unite their prayers at a throne of grace for mercies they together need, and combining with it, perhaps, some work of charity. All would say God speed such gatherings, and would ask to be remembered in them. It is the promiscuous public assemblage, where male and female sometimes exhort or lead in prayer together, where many a shallow Christian has loved to display his gifts, and many a Diotrephe nourished the spirit that loves to have the pre-eminence, where the one who presides has sometimes privately to ask suitable persons to take up the whole time of the meeting, so as to choke off the incompetent who are eager to speak or to pray,—that we object to; and to infer that we discourage prayer among our people because such meetings are not common among us, would be a most unfair conclusion.

We judge, from many signs around us, that a return to a Liturgical mode of worship, in our own or some modified form, is not far distant. Among the reasons which induce young men to come among us from other folds, a conviction of its superiority is always one; and

we see the adoption of portions of our services in various quarters. A congregation will sometimes propose to its pastor to use our whole service, retaining still their connection with their own denomination; or a pastor will select some of the offices of the Prayer Book for his use. Missionaries among the heathen have taken our morning and evening prayer for their converts, because the minds of the converted heathen were so much like those of children, that they required something simple and to fix attention, and nothing better adapted to the purpose could be found than in our responsive worship. The deaf can follow it. The blind can trace it out in raised characters. The slave easily commits it to memory, and bears his part in it. Our little ones, before they can read, find some portions that they can unite in, and, as they grow older, are eager to have their first Prayer Book, and to be permitted to utter their Hosannahs in the Temple.

We are glad to see that book, which has so many advantages in its use, and is so adapted to the universal wants of humanity, the book which we prize next to the Bible, for indeed it is almost in its every word taken from the Bible, more and more appreciated by our Christian brethren. One year's faithful use of it in any of their churches would make them retain and love it forever. In the German Reformed Church a proposed Liturgy has recently been issued. It is a step in a right direction. But how can those who have prepared it suppose that they, in their studies, can mould a service to be compared with one which has grown into perfectness by the contributions, the experience, the use, the wants, the piety, of nearly two thousand years? Let them rather take our Liturgy, and modify it as

their wants shall require, instead of beginning an entirely new Liturgy, and modifying it towards ours, as they are likely to do. Baxter tried the experiment; but, with all his piety and ability, his Liturgy would not be placed by any one in comparison with that of the Prayer-Book. We wonder at our own treasure. We regard it as little less than of inspiration. We sometimes have additions, in the shape of special forms set forth by our bishops; but they appear so poor in contrast with our time-honored services, as to show that they have not been moulded into shape by the use and piety of ages. We hope prejudice will not keep our brethren who are moving towards liturgical worship, from considering whether the new wine is better than the old, nor any false shame prevent them from adopting our worship, if it be good. Jesus took a form from the Jewish Liturgy. And there is the great consideration, that, if they use any Liturgy, and can adopt ours, to adopt it would tend to restore unity in the Church; for our varied modes of worship are not the least among the means of perpetuating divisions. Were they to take our Prayer-Book, it might indeed be the occasion of drawing many away from us, who would follow its familiar sounds without much inquiry who uttered them; but, in the end, the result would be greater unity among God's people, and, we trust, the establishment of our Church, as its rallying-point and centre.

The sufficiency of our Church service for awakening attention to religion, and for times of the greatest awakening, will be easily inferred from what has already been urged; for if it appears best adapted to our wants when we are most devotional, then, of course, in and for a season of enlarged spiritual influences, it would

be found all-sufficient. But facts confirm this inference. In times of the greatest religious interest, those who have gone forward in the use of such means as our Church has provided, have found as large a blessing, and had as large accessions to the fold, as any around them could speak of. There seems to be needed something to arouse attention, from time to time, to things eternal. We want excitement to break up the old mechanical life which has become routine. It stirs the stagnancy of our existence, and causes the stream of life to flow more fresh and clear, and there is an advantage, upon the whole, in such excitement, though there is danger in the probability of reaction from it, and we must be careful to improve it as we do a fresh infusion of health and animal life, not to self-indulgence and excess, but to the attaining and maintaining of a higher stand and firmer walk. All denominations express this natural want of some special awakening, in one way or other, by the protracted meeting, the quarterly communion with its lengthened exercises, or the camp-meeting. Our Church, in her Lenten season, has a better provision still. We commence it with a solemn Church fast. We increase our services. We direct special thought to the great subjects of repentance. We hold the observance at the very season when Christ died, and end it with the days of his death and burial, looking from our sins to the cross, and from the cross to our sins, thereby deepening penitence and increasing faith. There is little in the appointment to minister to false excitement; for there are only the sober services of the Church. There is much to further true excitement; for we read, chapter by chapter, the story of Gethsemane and Calvary, and preach on their connected

themes. And what is the result? The testimony of the most successful among us is, that it did never fail; but that the Lenten season, faithfully observed, was followed by enlarged charities, an increase of fervent piety, and great accessions to the band of Christ's professed disciples. We have seen no need, in such seasons of special awakening, of throwing aside our Liturgy. Our people gather in crowds to unite in it. We summon not the revival preacher, whose labors, whatever else they accomplish, work such disparagement to those of the settled pastor. We call not for the laity, in the prayer-meeting, to do what the ministry and the means of God's own appointment cannot do. We simply follow out the wise and healthful provisions of our Liturgy. And the blessing of increased attention and of wholesome and needed excitement follows, with no fear of those attendant evils which sometimes make the modern revival a doubtful blessing, even to those who seek and pray for it.



CHAPTER XI.

IN GODLY DISCIPLINE, AND EFFECTIVE CHECKS AND SAFEGUARDS, THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IS A DESIRABLE CHURCH, AS A CENTRE FOR UNION.

"Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."—*Cant.* vi., 10.

IN regard to government and discipline, as administered among us, our limits will not allow any lengthened remarks. nor are they needful.

In the government of the Church by bishops, with the advice of a standing committee of presbyters and laymen in each diocese,—in the checks against a usurping prelacy,—in our general and diocesan conventions, where bishops, clergy and laity meet in legislative council, with so happy an adjustment of their relative powers and rights, that one cannot well trample upon another,—and in our constitutional and canon laws, which offer their safeguards in all affairs, from those of our highest councils down to those of the smallest parish, we have a glorious combination of strength and liberty, of power with due restraints, of republicanism without radicalism; and, we think, have attained, as the result of divine appointment and the working of centuries of trial, to a very perfect polity. Its strength has been often exemplified, and those of other denominations have looked on with admiration, and have sometimes openly confessed, that in no other Protestant Church could such acts of discipline have been so firmly, steadily and successfully carried out. Well may they make the admission; for there are said to be cases in certain branches of their body, where men high in place, more than suspected of teaching gross heretical doctrine, are beyond the reach of any hand.

At the same time the government of our Church is so moderate and mild, that the idea of a lordly prelacy in our Bishops is absurd, and acts of undressed oppression are not heard of. No Bishop can send a minister to a parish against the will of the people, nor as a general rule do they consult the Diocesan in the choice or removal of a Pastor. Nor can any band of laymen usurp authority over the Pastor, nor he

oppress them. No Ministers of any Protestant denomination have truer liberty than our Presbyters. Each man among us, from the Bishop down to the humblest layman, is kept in his proper place by constitutional provisions enacted by common consent, and can neither molest nor be intruded on by others. We smile at the idea of a lordly prelacy, under which some of our brethren suppose us to groan, and feel that a bench of Presbyters, or a board of Trustees, or the rule of a Methodist Bishop or presiding Elder, would be a hard exchange for us. "I am literally a servant of servants," said a Pastor of another persuasion. "I have as many masters as there are male communicants of my Church. If the Minister, where the government is congregational, be of commanding mind, he secures his own proper place," said he, "but if he be not energetic and resolute, he will be trampled upon." "If you wish to see despotism," said a layman of the same persuasion, "you may find it in its perfection in our board of Trustees." Now we do not suppose that evils like these break forth always among these brethren, but we fear that there is a want of strength and conservatism, and of wholesome checks and safeguards, so that it depends very much on the character of the Pastor, not upon the system, whether such evils shall appear or be kept under. With us the weak and the strong are held in place by written law and established usage, instead of having to hold their position by personal contest. A layman among us would never presume to rise up in God's house and give out a notice which the Pastor did not judge proper to be given. We have no such scenes. Our laity have large rights. From the choice of a Bishop to the secularities of a parish, not-

ing can be done without their consent ; yet they agree with other orders in the Church to place themselves under due limitations, so that they intrude not upon the proper sphere of the Minister. Each moves in his own orbit, kept in place by fixed laws, and with none to interfere with him there. That there is some strong conservative bond among us binding us together, is seen in the remarkable fact that ours is the only ecclesiastical body in this country not rent asunder by the fierce sectional strifes which pervade the land. Neither doctrinal nor political disputes have yet divided us. We may be told that our time will yet come. It may, but we doubt it. We may be taunted with the reproach that we have not life or religion enough among us to make us quarrel and divide. But we believe that there is something in our system, some conservative bonds other than those of apathy and indifference, which keep us at unity when our brethren become divided, and that multitudes, sick almost unto death of the endless schisms elsewhere, regard our position with wistful eyes, and will on account of it look more favorably upon us, as a rallying point and centre of Christian union.

CHAPTER XII.

“Walk about Zion, and go round about her ; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks.”—*Ps.* xlviii., 12, 13.

A FEW other points not brought under the preceding classifications, may claim a brief notice.

We think our Church has a decided advantage over

many others in her provision for the young of the flock. Infant baptism, though retained in the standards of some of our brethren equally as in our own as of divine authority, has among them practically and comparatively fallen into disuse. It is common to hear those educated in their systems saying, that it is no doubt agreeable enough to Scripture to baptize little ones, but that it is quite as well to let it alone until the nature and obligations of the sacrament can be understood by the recipient. Is it then according to the mind of Christ that they should be baptized, and may our mind be not to have it done? In large congregations, holding to infant baptism, there will be perhaps not half a score grafted into the Church in that sacrament in the course of a year, while with us, in a Church of the same magnitude, the report would be of more than a hundred. It is rare to find unbaptized adults in the families of our congregations, except it be in such as have come to us from the ecclesiastical bodies around us, or have been greatly under their influence. Infant baptism is either according to the will of Christ, or it is not. In the latter case it should be stricken from our standards at once; but in the former, more should be made of it than is made by our brethren, for what Christ approves or appoints must have a large blessing in it. Our baptismal office, with its Rubric directing the Minister to admonish the people often, not to defer baptism, together with the performance of it publicly, and the relation the baptism of children bears to confirmation; all tend to keep the subject before our congregations, so that it cannot well fall into such neglect as among other denominations.

We baptize all infants; others, those only of commu-

nicants. We regard the right to baptism as one given by Christ to the child, not to the parent. If the parents be dead, may not a near relative, who is a believer, offer the orphan for baptism? And if a parent be spiritually dead, why may not Christian friends, a Sunday-School Teacher, or a member of the Church, do the same? All Jewish children were circumcised. God did not refuse them the seal of the covenant because a parent might not be of the spiritual Israel. A little one may be near death, and, as we trust, about to enter the presence of the Saviour; yet even then our brethren will not let the name of Christ be named upon it unless the parents are communicants. So harshly does this grate upon the feelings of afflicted parents, that our clergy are often sent for to baptize the dying little ones of other folds, while the unreasonableness and cruelty of the refusal of their own Pastor to do it has frequently driven families away from them to our Church. The reason for withholding baptism from any but children of religious parents, viz., that it is necessary to have a pledge that the child shall be religiously brought up, and that none but religious parents can so educate the child, or that there is no security that it will be so educated, where the parents are not pious, does not apply in the case of the dying infant, and yet it is denied admission to the visible Church, though Christ is about to take it to the Church in glory. It will not be replied by any intelligent Christian, that the child will be saved, though unbaptized, if dying in infancy, and therefore its baptism is a matter of no consequence, for the same might have been said in regard to circumcision; and yet God and his people were rigid as to its require-

ment. The natural affection of any parent would lead him to wish that his child should be baptized, even if it would go to Heaven without it, and our holy religion gratifies all right natural affections. Clearly, therefore, there seem to be cases where the rule of excluding children of unbelieving parents from baptism is wrong, and we believe that in Christian countries, where little ones have in the Sunday-School, in religious friends, in the Church, some to care for their souls, it is always wrong. The baptism of a child of an irreligious family, apart from the blessing to the infant itself, has often been the first step towards bringing the parents and the whole household to a sense of duty, and to find salvation.

Under other systems, whatever may be theoretically held, the practical result often seems to be an impression, that little children cannot have an experimental knowledge of religion, nor take its vows upon themselves ; that they can only be well stored with scripture and catechism, and that, by and by, at the age of sixteen or eighteen, they may be converted and admitted to a public profession of religion. This is to give up the best part of life, in a great measure, to the devil. Jesus Christ was the model child of the Christian dispensation, and at twelve years of age he had been three times publicly presented to God, viz., in circumcision, at his purification, and at the Passover ; yes, three times before a child, as many suppose, can rightly come under any of the vows of the Christian covenant, was Jesus admitted to those of the Church of God ! And why, but as an ensample for his people ? We endeavor to follow it. We urge the baptism of all infants that have any friends with enough of faith to desire for

them the blessings of the Christian covenant to present them for baptism. We believe that, the more of such faith there is, and the more it is carried out in efforts to bring up the baptized in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the greater will be the blessing; and that parents may so give their children to God, and so educate them, that they shall never know the time of their passing from death unto life, though having clear evidence that the life of God is in the soul, just as they have no conscious recollection of the beginning of natural life, but know it exists by its acts. We press earnestly upon our people the duty of training up their children as Christians, not to be Christians in their years of maturity.

And then we have for our young people, so trained, the rite of confirmation, most admirably adapted to carry on and develop the work of early piety, in which the child is invited to take upon himself his baptismal vows so soon as he comes of age to understand and feel them. The appeal to prepare for confirmation, made every year, arrests the attention of the young. The rite has all the advantages of those deciding processes by which revivalists seek to lead the inquiring to commit and pledge themselves to the cross, by some open act, with none of their disadvantages and evils. It meets the young just at the right point, with something for them to do, something intermediate and preparatory to the Lord's Supper. And then the next step is to the Christian Passover. Every pastor among us regards confirmation as one of his very best helps in meeting the wants of the young. We may indeed sometimes bring forward those who are not prepared; but, if so, the error is one of the head, not of the heart.

The young who thus come forward may be mistaken, but they are sincere, and hypocrisy is not the sin of their age, but of later years, and the unpardonable sin is not among those who erringly confess, but among such as wilfully deny their Lord. There are the self-deceived of all ages in the Church, but the proportion of them is far less among those who have made an early, than those who have made a late profession. We do not expect the piety of an old Christian in the child, but hope that its immature fruits may ripen under the means, not rejecting them as fruits because they are immature. And the result shows that the child, so trained and permitted to share in the ordinances of the Church, where there is in him conscientiousness and correctness of outward conduct, and habits of prayer, will attain to clearer and more spiritual views and experiences, as did our Lord's disciples, who were ignorant at first, though disciples, until the measure of the stature of the perfect man is attained.

We think the advantage is also with us in the mode of admission to a public confession of Christ. With others the candidate is brought before the Church, or before a Church committee, for examination as to his experience, and is admitted to membership by vote. It is an ordeal which the sensitive dread, and the most worthy, but humble and diffident, shrink from. And it is an unsatisfactory test. We cannot read the heart. The voluble and confident can easily relate an experience which will pass, while those who can say but little for themselves, and are reluctant to speak of their inward feelings, hold back from the trial in sorrow, though they may have a piety truer, and that will wear better than that of the other. St. Paul's rule is the only safe

one. He does not say, "Let me or the Church examine a man," but "let him examine himself, and so let him come." The candidate must be put upon his own responsibility, as by Philip in the case of the eunuch, where it was said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized." Where there is no gross outward unfitness, one who desires to approach the sacraments may not be debarred. As to the spiritual experience requisite, the pastor must faithfully set forth what it is, and then each one must judge for himself whether he has it.

And the pastor too ought to have the sole authority in admitting to and administering sacraments. It is given to him in God's word. None others there exercised it. He is best acquainted with his flock, and the best judge of their fitness, so far as any are to judge. To send the inquiring, the timid, the female, the humble, and the depressed, into a Church meeting, to have a personal experience unfolded and judged, as it must be excruciating to the candidate, so is it taking the pastor's own proper work out of his hands, and giving it to those who are neither qualified nor authorized to perform it.

It may be objected that, with us, the standard of requirement for admission to a public confession of Christ is very low. The term is a relative one. If it mean low in comparison with scripture rule, we deny the charge; if in comparison with that nominally set up by some of our brethren, we may admit it. We say nominally; for, however strict the terms of admission among them may professedly be, they do in reality have to admit men to Church ordinances pretty much as we do; and all the gain of high requirement is to

frighten away the timid and the humble. An intimate acquaintance with congregations where great strictness of inquiry as to the reality of the conversion and the genuineness of the experience of a candidate are proposed, will show us just as many doubtful characters and worldly-minded professors, as when men are put more upon their own self-examination and personal responsibility. The Church must be kept pure, not by the erection of high barriers at its door, for these keep out the weak oftener than the unworthy; but by the faithful preaching of the word. When a high standard of experience is set up, and all are measured by one and the same rule, there is not that merciful allowance which scripture makes for difference of character and variety of attainment. The true principle is to admit on the smallest hopeful appearances of piety, with the expectation that these may lead on to higher attainments in the divine life, and allowing the sacraments to be used as the means of making them. The apostles baptized all on their own profession, though it would seem to us as if a little personal examination of such an one as Simon Magus might have detected his hypocrisy, even without the miraculous gift of the discerning of spirits. Our Lord admitted Judas among the twelve, though he knew him as the future traitor and devil; perhaps to teach us that we are not to reject, where there is nothing in the outward conduct to warrant us in condemning.

The operation of strict and high tests is often as in the following instance:—A man, among our brethren of another persuasion, who was well known and highly respected, died at the age of ninety. He had all his life been active in the affairs of his church, had sus-

tained family worship for years, and, so far as the eye of man could see, was as exemplary and devout as any Christian; yet in all that time he had never been to the Lord's table, and he received the communion only in the last year of his life, though he then declared that he had had the same experience and preparation for it when sixteen as when he was ninety. If he had been a Churchman, he would not in all those years have been deprived of the privilege. It was the fault of the system in which he had been trained, a system which has operated with the same sad results in thousands of similar cases. Better that many unworthy persons should come to the Lord's table, than that one such true Christian should be kept away by over strict and unscriptural tests. The wheat and the tares must grow together, nor will the Lord of the harvest thank the officious servants who propose nicely to separate them. We do not plead for a low state of piety in the Church, but for low bars of admission to its inclosure. We must preach that without holiness no man shall see the Lord; but men must judge themselves, if they would not be judged of him. We have no right to shut out from the privileges of the Church any who desire to partake of them, unless there be some outward immorality, as a known and gross evidence of unfitness. Any other test is unscriptural, and, in its influence, evil.

The style of preaching in our Church is not what is usually called popular. It is objected against us, that the sermons of our clergy are not exciting, would not stir up a Revival, and do not enter enough into the current events of the day. We regard this as no reproach, or if it be, as one that might be urged equally against our Lord. We do not wish to draw upon our-

selves a sarcasm like that of one who, when asked, What was the news? replied he did not know, for he did not go to meeting on the preceding Lord's Day. We preach the good old doctrines of the Cross, believing that they are the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation, though many regard them as effete and threadbare. We hold the preaching of the Cross to be the great remedy for all that is wrong in social life as well as in spiritual, and that, in making men good Christians, we adopt the surest means of making them good citizens, and thus of correcting all civil and political wrong in the land. Those preachers who bring the pulpit to bear upon local or public evil, do but strip off leaves from the tree of sin, soon succeeded by another growth as vigorous, while those who aim to change the heart, strike at the root of the tree and utterly destroy it. Our Lord's rule is to make clean the inside of the cup and the platter, that the outside may be clean also. And though the multitude may be drawn away from us for the time by those who resort to every exciting topic of the day, and preach to the times, as it is termed, yet, upon the whole, by preaching for eternity, we believe that we shall be gainers as a Church, and certainly best fulfil our mission as a Church in its influence on society, and in the preparation it was meant to afford for a higher state of existence.

It is common to find in other denominations a Church with a history like the following: Its place of worship is large, and was once thronged, but is now closed, or entered only by a scanty band of worshippers. Families formerly connected with it have gone elsewhere, or more likely, remain at home in neglect of the Lord's day and house. We ask the reason for

the change? We are told that the pastor preached politics, or introduced the subject of slavery continually, as if it were an evil greater, and with which he had more to do than the slavery of his own hearers to Satan, or that he dabbled in spiritualism, or that he set up new and unscriptural tests for admission to the Lord's table, or left off preaching the Gospel for some modern mode of reform, and so the hungry sheep that looked up and were not fed, wandered elsewhere, and the congregation disgusted, dispersed, or forsook altogether the public worship of God's house. In many and many a place, where throngs were wont to assemble on the Lord's Day, you shall find now a scanty band of worshippers, while far away from the sanctuary of their fathers, little knots gather here and there to listen to some dreamer or teacher of lies, or else spend their Sundays lazily at home. Now we have many feeble churches kept down by prejudice and dominant sects, but we have not one that has been brought to desolation by Spiritualism, Abolitionism, Millerism, or political preaching. On the contrary, our Church is everywhere a silent witness against all departures from the preaching of the Cross, and our ministers commend themselves more and more to the good sense and sober piety of the community, by simply minding their own business.

And as to Revivals, those who once brought it against us as a charge to our discredit, that we had none in the times when they were so prevalent, do now themselves speak more than doubtfully about the desirableness of Revivals, in the popular sense of the term. We have gone on steadily in the old paths, seeking to have constant accessions to our fold, and now, after the

old Revival system may be said to have died out, and the days of Camp Meetings to have ended, our brethren come back to the position we have always held, That the work of God is best carried on by stated preaching, the regular ministry, and accessions all the year round, rather than by wandering Revival preachers, protracted meetings, and spasmodic excitements, which are followed by a relapse into coldness and decay. With the Dissenters and Methodists of England the Revival and the Camp Meeting are as strange as to us. There was one Pentecost in Scripture, and after that the preaching of the Word was attended with the more ordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost. John the Baptist's Revival awakened his own jealous fears as to its results, and with reason, for of all the multitudes baptized by him, few were prepared to welcome Christ. Men are too much disposed to take the exceptional and strange in religion for their rule, as in the Pentecost and Saul's conversion, instead of looking at the general and ordinary, as set forth in scripture for their guidance. Not by the bursting waterspout is the earth made fruitful, but by the gentle dews and rains. Patient labor, with continued good results, should be our aim. It is regarded as a lazy and unprofitable method of husbandry, for the farmer to put off his sowing or harvesting as long as he can, and then to call in a great troop of his neighbors, and with much excitement and many stimulants do the work up in a day. It may be done, indeed, but would have been far better done had he set about it with his own hands and help, quietly and earnestly, day by day.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, IN HER AFFINITIES WITH OTHER ECCLESIASTICAL BODIES, IS WELL FITTED TO BE THE RALLYING-POINT AMONG THEM.

“Now a mediator is not a mediator of one.”—*Gal.* iii., 20.

ANOTHER great advantage our Church possesses as a centre of union, is in her affinities with the leading characteristics and features of other denominations.

It has already been argued that no other ministry could be found, on which all would be so likely to unite as in our own. We now add, that there is no Protestant Church which could present more points of agreement with other bodies than our own. As among brothers, there will sometimes be one who concentrates in himself the family features and characteristics, and is emphatically the brother of the family, so is our Church among Churches the representative, and centre of unity and likeness. It was in this point of view that Dr. Jarvis, when asked, What were the peculiarities of the Episcopal Church? well replied, The Episcopal Church has no peculiarities. The idea advanced under this head might be illustrated in many points of view. Let us select a few of them.

With the Presbyterian we harmonize in reference to the succession in the ministry from the days of the apostles, though we differ as to the line of its transmission, he holding it to have been through Presbyters, and we through Bishops, while the *jus divinum* and

succession are held by the one as strongly as by the other. In our Articles and Creed, he would find little to disapprove. The XVIIIth of the XXXIX Articles has been claimed by Calvinist and Arminian, and both with a good conscience have subscribed to it, probably because its doctrinal statements are general, entering not into the particulars wherein they differ. In conservativeness, reverence for antiquity, and abhorrence of radicalism, the Presbyterian is a Churchman, and sometimes a very high Churchman. The German and Dutch Reformed branches of his denomination have their Liturgies, while many Presbyterians favor their use, adopt clerical vestments, and in some other points are in spirit and practice one with us. The single particular in which there seems to be any serious obstacle to union between us and them is in regard to the ministry. Cannot this be overcome? Many of their number might, with Calvin, desire a moderate Episcopacy. Others with Paley might receive it as a matter of expediency, regarding a Bishop as little more than the Moderator of their own Presbyteries. And all, one would suppose, might allow ordination by a Bishop, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, for we as well as they require the hands of the Presbytery in ordaining, and there again have affinity with them; and thus, until we could become of one mind in regard to the right, receiving Episcopacy as a fact, the act of the Presbytery satisfying them, and that of the Bishop satisfying us. It is not necessary that all who receive Episcopacy should agree in their views of it, any more than that every one who becomes a citizen of these United States should have the same views of its government. The assent of a foreigner to certain require-

ments makes him a citizen with us, and we trust to the influence of time and other causes to make him every way a good citizen and a thorough republican. Surely the venerable and beloved fathers of that Presbyterian Church which stood so nearly with ours at the Reformation, and whose leaders then would gladly have assented to a moderate Episcopacy, or even desired it, and the members of whose communion are still one with us on so many important points, and which marshals such a noble array of faithful ministers, can discover some mode by which they can concede to us all that our consciences compel us to hold without any sacrifice of their own conscience, so that we can stand together against the radicalism and heresies of the day, abhorred by them as much as by us, and against Romanism our common foe. They might find in such a movement a remedy for their own divisions, now so sadly multiplied, that an editor of one of their leading papers confesses that he does not know how many separate bodies of Presbyterians there are in this country. Will they not individually labor for such a restoration of unity to the Church? Will they not, in their collective assemblies, give some response to the voice of our highest Church council in the matter of Christian union? Will not a revival of the brotherly love and correspondence of the Reformation, with a view to a more perfect unity, be delightful? They stand high among our Protestant brethren in our esteem, as they are near to us in form and spirit, and we pray that we and they may soon be joined in one holy fellowship of visible and true unity.

With the Baptist we should have affinity in the leading point of his system, for we allow and practise

baptism by immersion whenever it is desired. He might have to concede to us the like liberty of conscience in regard to other modes of baptism, and certainly would have to yield to us in the baptism of infants. We infer that the concession might be more easily granted now than in former days, from the fact that advocates for open communion are increasing in that denomination, and that, in some cases, its ministers have advised their people to call upon our clergy for the baptism of their little ones when there was a desire to have them christened.

With the Methodists we have many affinities. They have hardly left us. They have a part of our XXXIX Articles. They use our occasional offices. In England the whole Liturgy is used in some of their churches. They show their love for a responsive worship by joining in, irregularly, with the prayers of the minister, while our service would give them the opportunity of saying Amen and Glory at the proper times. Their great leaders were ordained Presbyters of our Church, and would gladly have received an Episcopate from us if they could have done so. Their first consecration of Bishops and separation from the Church was opposed, all intention of any thing of the kind having long been disclaimed by John Wesley, and the final act strongly condemned by his brother Charles, as the act of one in his dotage. An early American Bishop of the Methodists would gladly have had his consecration made regular by our Bishops, and entered into correspondence with one of them for that end. Many of our Church regard it now as a great mistake that the Methodists were not retained in the Church of England, receiving their orders from thence, but allowed

liberty in points where they desired it. Is it too late to rectify this mistake? The low state of religion in the Church of England was the origin of Methodism. Religion is now, according to the testimony of their own writers, as flourishing in the Church of England as among the Methodists, while they have gone too far in their work and departure. Is it not time for a reunion? Some parts of their system added to ours would benefit us, and they need some things which we can give them. Their itinerant system is best for a sparse population; our parochial ministry is preferable for large and established churches. We need their Presiding Elders, or Rural Deans; they need the laity in council. They need more of our high literary requirement where it can be had for the ministry; we need more of their tact and readiness to find out and employ talent of every sort in the Master's service. We say to our Methodist brethren, why are ye the last to speak a word of bringing back King David to a reunited kingdom? Would your Bishops, now, or those who are to be made Bishops, for the sake of union, receive consecration from ours, if it were offered them, still retaining in other respects, your own organization? Or better still, could there be a more complete fusion of churches at once, for it would very surely, in the end, follow an affirmative to the first query? Is it not time to propound such questions in your Conferences?

With the Congregationalist we should have fewer affinities, and there would be between him and us the embittering remembrances of more bloody feuds in past ages, than between us and others. Nevertheless we should be able in the Church to offer him that lay element which he so much honors; yet with restrictions

upon its abuse which he has not. To our ministry he could not well object, since if any single congregation may ordain its own Minister, much more may a whole national Church by its representatives confer orders. And it would seem as if the practical results of Congregationalism might lead any thoughtful and pious adherent thereof to ask whether there be not needed in his system just such elements of strength and permanence, and such securities against error as ours affords. This Church has had in New England the fairest field, on which to try its energies, ever presented, and had it for generations almost to itself; and what are the results? Seminaries inculcate theological tenets which their earlier professors would have accounted heretical. The largest of their colleges has passed over to Unitarian control. Thousands of their people have gone to Unitarianism, to the Christian creed, to Universalism or Millerism. A Minister may teach Anti-Trinitarian doctrines, and it is said that in some cases there is no council that can agree well enough among themselves what Trinitarianism is, to try him, or it has no power to depose him if tried and condemned. It gives us no pleasure to advert to such things, but they are too true; and every candid Congregationalist watching the deteriorating process in his own Church, must admit that it is so, and thoughtfully ask, "Where is the remedy?" We answer, that the Protestant Episcopal Church, with its scriptural ministry, sound doctrines, and strong safeguards, is the hope of New England and the best refuge of Congregationalism. If the truth as it is in Jesus is preserved on that soil, or regains possession of it in the next half century, it will be in and by the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In regard to others who take to themselves the Protestant name, we can plead but little in the way of affinity. The Friends, like the Methodists, had their origin in the supposed necessity of the times. The doctrine of the Spirit's influences had fallen into decay in the English Church. The Friends saw the evil and strove to remedy it, but, as usual in such cases, went to another extreme. Now they are meeting the fate of all such errorists, a part of their number going off to wider errors, and the better portion drawing nearer to the Orthodox faith—a process which will continue until the sect dies out. Strange as it may seem from the wide contrast between the baldness of Friends' worship and the forms of our own, the movement of the more orthodox oftener leads them to us than to other Protestant bodies. We infer hence a law of affinity, and easily find it in that staid conservative spirit and love of order which mark both Churchman and Friend.

With Unitarianism and other errors we claim no affinity, except that we can see that those who have embraced them, have been driven into them by systems which we revolt at as well as they, and except, also, that we hope the return movement which is bringing some of them back to orthodoxy, will lead them to our fold as their true home. If our Church had been known to multitudes who were not doctrinally Unitarian, but went with that secession from orthodoxy, through the influence of family ties, or the want of clear and discriminating views, or the influence of sympathy with its causes, they would have found their home with us rather than where they now are. And even now there are many in Unitarian congregations that enter not into the subtile distinctions of that sys-

tam, but hold to the great doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement just as we do, and their number is increasing. With such we have sympathy; but for the ultra-transcendental, pantheistic errors, into which the system with others has branched, only deep abhorrence. And we hold up The Protestant Episcopal Church, ever steadfast in the faith of the Trinity, as the gathering home of all who hold the head, and honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.

Our work is now done. It has been the aim of these pages to vindicate the claims of The Protestant Episcopal Church as the mediator of Peace, and the rallying point of union among all evangelical Protestants. We have been misunderstood, and have suffered under unjust prejudices. Some of these may be removed by the considerations herein suggested. The intelligent and thoughtful among our brethren must see that we have many and strong points of excellence which cannot but win their approval and love. If they have been set forth with evident and perhaps partial affection, that surely is a mistake more pardonable than a weak attachment for and defence of one's own Church. If overdrawn statements of evils existing elsewhere have been presented, it may be excused, from the consideration that we are poorly qualified to judge of that which lies within another pale. And yet it may not be amiss to see things there as they appear to an outsider. The strongest statements here will hardly come up to those published confessions which appear from time to time in the religious papers of our brethren. Let all that is imperfect in the manner of presenting the subject, every thing offensive to denominational feeling, any little misstatement be forgiv-

en, and let the main questions of union, and the fitness of the Protestant Episcopal Church for the position claimed for her be judged with candor, and as in the sight of God.

The visible and real unity of the Church must be restored. Christ wills it. The world's conversion stays for it. The evils of discord are growing worse and worse. The idea that the Saviour meant his Church to be so divided, or that He looks down upon our dissensions save with abhorrence, is too preposterous to need combating. The spirit which smiles at the amiable weakness of those who dream of a restoration of unity among all evangelical Protestants, is one of unbelief, if not of one who loves discord and strife. The word and the prayers of Christ require and promise unity. There are thousands of holy men pleading for it. It must come. The false pride and shame which keep us from doing right, and following truth because of the concessions we must make, are among the great obstacles in the way of union. If the Saviour were to manifest Himself in wrath for our destruction, we should soon be brought to ourselves, and find a way of peace. If love to Him and to each other filled our hearts, that way would soon open. No doubt when Christians are really aroused to the work we shall have to make concessions for the sake of unity, as well as others, though not in any thing that we hold as of divine right, and though in the main we believe our system will be found, judged by scripture and practical trial, the best for the rallying ground. And we doubt not that the highest Churchmen among us—those whom some of our brethren seem to regard as the greatest obstacles on our side to union, but of whose true character and

and position they know but little, will be found among the foremost in concession on all minor points, and the best advocates and supporters of the unity of the Church. Is it not time to seek its restoration? Fathers and brethren of every name, does not God call upon us to attempt the work? The shadows of the night, when no man can work, are falling upon some of us. Shall the day close, our labors cease, and the Church be so left divided, and we pass from it so to the presence of that Saviour who commands us to be one, and to that Heaven where all are one? God is with those who seek to make peace. May He in his mercy accept this humble offering on the altar of peace, and use and bless it to the furtherance of unity and peace, among all who love the Saviour's name.

“Oh, ever pray for Salem's peace,
For they shall prosp'rous be,
Thou holy city of our God,
Who bear true love to thee.”



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The Life of George Herbert.

BY GEORGE L. DUYCKINCK.

New York, 1858: pp. 197.



WE have too long neglected to do our share in bringing this delightful little book to the notice of the lovers of holy George Herbert, among whom we may safely reckon a large number of the readers of the "Atlantic." It is based on the life by Izaak Walton, but contains much new matter, either out of Walton's reach or beyond the range of his sympathy.

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Another and very interesting addition to the several memoirs of our Bishops which Mr. Norton has been diligently preparing and sending through the press. The peculiar energy displayed by the subject of this memoir, while, a child of eight years, he crossed the river from John's Island to Charleston in a boat, and, by his earnest pleading, obtained the services of a physician for his dying father, continued to mark him through life, united to the tenderness and ready sympathy which formed so important an element of his piety and his usefulness.—*Protestant Churchman*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

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This is an interesting and truthful sketch of one whose memory is warmly cherished in our diocese, and whose character and attainments were such as to make him one of the men of mark in our Church. The material for the biography has been well worked up by Mr. Norton, and the interest of the volume is much increased by the introduction of some graphic reminiscences by the Rev. Paul Trapler, and extracts from some of the Bishop's own letters when travelling in Europe.

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